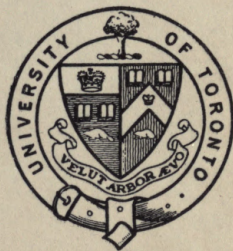


The Marquis
of Salisbury

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BY

REV. JAMES J. ELLIS,

AUTHOR OF

"RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE," "CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON,"
"ABRAHAM LINCOLN," ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

IT is scarcely necessary to vindicate the claim of the Marquis of Salisbury to a place among the heroes of the Victorian era. During a period of the most intense national excitement he selected a position and steadily maintained it amidst all the drift on either side ; and he gathered round his person a strong party, some of whom were almost hereditary enemies to his political faith, and drew them into the closest possible alliance with his other followers. Having formed a party, he by their aid originated and successfully accomplished some of the most remarkable reforms, social and political, that ever braced Britain for her destiny among the nations ; and, above all things, he has, more than any Minister since Pitt, elevated the name and increased the authority of England among the Great Powers of Europe. These proofs of superlative ability are admitted even by those who differ most widely from him upon vital questions ; indeed, most thoughtful natives of these isles now agree that he bulks and will be remembered as one of the greatest statesmen of our day.

Lord Salisbury is indeed one of the surprises of our age, for no one could have predicted when he entered

Parliament how far he would outstrip all his fellow-competitors for honours. From his antecedents, political aptitude was expected in him, but at the commencement of his career it did not appear probable that he would rise above mediocrity.

He himself, by the keenness of his invective and the acid wit which bites as it soaks into the mind, did himself some injustice; but as his mind ripened, and he obtained a firmer grasp and control of his powers, he learned that men are seldom educated by a gibe or influenced for good by a sneer that both stings and shames them at the same time.

The versatile genius of Lord Beaconsfield for a time eclipsed his more patient follower, but after the comet had disappeared from the heavens, the orb it had obscured shone out with a more abiding if a paler light. The patient go-a-foot genius of our countrymen recognised and admired the matter-of-fact Englishman, stolid on points of duty, impervious to criticism, and, while strong for duty, withal not in the least degree tyrannical.

Such men have a charm and an interest quite apart from their party politics; for as neither party has a monopoly of genius or worth, so both can admire, and do admire, those whom they are bound sometimes to oppose and combat. Not, then, as the leader of the Conservatives, but as a great Englishman, do we reverence and study the career of the Marquis of Salisbury.

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THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE SCHOOL TO ST. STEPHEN'S.

“To-day

Unsullied comes to thee, new born ;

To-morrow is not thine.

The sun may cease to shine

For thee ere earth shall greet its morn.

Be earnest, then, in thought and deed,

Nor fear approaching night ;

Calm comes with evening light,

And hope and peace—thy duty heed

To-day.”

“Those are most to be envied who soonest learn to expect nothing for which they have not worked hard, and who have never acquired the habit (a habit which an unbroken course of University successes too surely breeds) of pitying themselves over-much if in after-life they happen to work in vain.”—MACAULAY.

1830—1853.

BORN TO A BOX-SEAT—SOMEBODY'S BROTHER—MASTER OF THE KING'S ROBES AND MASTER OF HIS OWN FORTUNES—THE IMP—A BEAGLE THAT HUNTED FOR HIS OWN BENEFIT—COMMON-PLACE BUT CORRECT—TRAVEL IN MANY LANDS—MEMBER FOR STAMFORD.

ROBERT ARTHUR TALBOT GASCOYNE-CECIL, third Marquis of Salisbury, was born at Hatfield House, Herts,

on the 13th day of February 1830. From his earliest years he gave many proofs of the hungry energy and stable capacity for work which indicates the born leader and helper of men, but until the death of his elder brother he had but little chance of rising to eminence. His brother, perhaps because of his blindness and delicate health, exhibited the passive virtues that warm and charm a home, rather than the activities that are needful to mould a state; and it seemed as if Lord Robert were doomed to the most ignominious lot that can ever betide an able man: we mean that of being somebody's brother. Do you not know many people, some of them the little sons of great fathers, and others the greater relatives of great men, who are nevertheless tolerated or received solely because of their relationship, whatever may be their character or merits? Their demerit or excellence are alike forgotten, and you and others regard them with interest solely on account of the splendour which they perhaps rather dislike. From the respectable mediocrity inevitable to the only career possible to Lord Salisbury's brother, Lord Robert was saved by the death of the heir to the family title. He was then free to commence life upon his own account; his talents were henceforth unshackled and able to find and make the sphere they required.

This must be remembered in estimating the weight and metal of the late Prime Minister, who cannot be said to possess genius, if Dumas be correct. "How many men of talent only want a great misfortune to

become men of genius," said the Frenchman, who evidently regarded genius as the pattern impressed alike upon all metal that passed under the die; whereas genius is rather the ability to recognise and seize fitting opportunities for fitting action; it is the quality which enables some men to do better than others under equal strain and testing. Genius in a Prime Minister is revealed by his control of affairs and by the incidence of prosperity; in the sea-captain by his ability to manage the vessel committed to his charge so as best to advance his master's interests. The word genius has been used as a bugbear to frighten naughty children, instead of being a call and incentive to every man to do his best. As to whether Lord Salisbury possesses genius, may be an open question, but there can be no doubt at all that every reader of these words may in his sphere exhibit more or less of that which, when picked to pieces, means industry, patience, and a desire and resolution to do one's best.

Before relating the successive steps by which Lord Robert attained his present eminence, it must be admitted that he had considerable advantages in commencing life as he did. He was privileged in that he was born to what has been called "a box-ticket in the theatre of human life." The passage in which the preceding quotation occurs is worth transcribing, because, like all that Dean Boyd wrote, it is capable of more than one application; all his grapes will yield wine after a second treading, and some after a third

pressing. "In all societies," says Dean Boyd, "it is advisable to associate, if possible, with the highest; not that the highest are always the best, but because, if disgusted there, we can at any time descend; but if we begin with the lowest, to ascend is impossible. In the grand theatre of human life a box-ticket takes us through the house." The scion of a family that for ten successive generations has been eminent for statesmanship has a vast prejudice in his favour; he has only to justify the expectations that men instinctively entertain on account of his ancestry; he has not to create a presumption that he is able: he, in fact, inherits a box-ticket to his own advantage. Especially so if to such talents and capacity as form his original endowment and stock in life there be added a title, with sufficient wealth to adequately support its dignity: which last items are of much interest in these realms.

To acquire a box-ticket for oneself, and by the peerage of intellect to compel homage, or, better still, by affection to win love—in short, to aim at the highest, and to be content with no secondary ends, ought to be the purpose of all men.

Before speaking of the box-ticket won by his own industry, it is meet that we should look at that which Lord Robert Cecil received from his ancestors. Anti-quarians, groping to little good purpose, have discovered that one Robert Sitsilt, a soldier of the reign of William Rufus, founded the Cecil family. Of this soldier we know nothing, except the fact that he fought against

the wild Welsh, who probably disliked him, and that he received for his services sundry lands in the border district of Herefordshire, which second fact must have been still more distasteful to the dispossessed Welsh owners. Such trifles occurred daily in those bad old times, and are of interest and profit to few save to antiquarians and the like.

Such remote inquiries are perhaps needful for heralds, but for all practical present-time folk, one David Cysell of Stamford may be regarded as the architect of the family fortunes.

David Cysell lived when Henry VIII. was king, and by dint of push and tact he acquired the local dignity of Alderman of Stamford and Sheriff of Northamptonshire. Like a prudent far-seeing man, the alderman placed his eldest son, Richard, at court, where he was at first a royal page and then Master of the Robes. In the latter capacity he was present with King Henry at the mummary known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and not without pecuniary profit and advantage to himself; so that after a few years of royal favour Richard Cysell retired to his native county, to there enjoy the wealth he had acquired.

The son of this Master of the Robes, himself a William Cecil, became the first Lord Burleigh; his talents and Elizabeth's favour combined advanced the Cecils to the first rank in England. William Cecil obtained praise while a student for his diligence and patient industry, for scholarship was then deemed essen-

tial in a statesman. He entered public life under the patronage of Somerset the Protector, and when that Duke fell, his pupil made favour with those who had seized the forfeited power. At the accession of Mary, Cecil was stripped of his offices, but with a wise intuition he contrived to secure the favour of Princess Elizabeth, who upon the death of her sister made him Secretary of State.

William Cecil enjoyed this dignity all his life; and he founded two still existing patrician families—the house of Exeter, which sprang from his elder son, and that of Salisbury, from his younger. This younger son, Robert Cecil, was a little man with a large square head, a head in ludicrous contrast to his body. Queen Elizabeth called him “her little man,” “the elf,” and “the pigmy.” Robert Cecil understood the art of managing those who could benefit him, and he accepted the jest with apparent pleasure. Thus he wrote to his father, mindful that the Queen would read the letter, in the following strain: “I received a gracious letter from Her Majesty under her sporting name of pigmy; I mislike not the name only because she gave it to me.”

Disraeli the elder, writing of Queen Elizabeth, speaks thus of Robert Cecil:—“Secretary Cecil, the youngest son of Lord Burleigh, seems to have perfectly entered into her character. Lady Derby wore about her neck and in her bosom a portrait; the Queen espying it, inquired about it, but her ladyship was anxious to con-

ceal it. The Queen insisted upon having it, and discovering it to be the portrait of young Cecil, she snatched it away, and tying it upon her shoe, walked long with it; afterwards she pinned it on her elbow and wore it some time there. Secretary Cecil hearing of this, composed some verses and got them set to music; this music the Queen insisted on hearing. In his verses, Cecil sang that he repined not though her Majesty was pleased to grace others; he contented himself with the favour she had given him by wearing his portrait on her feet and her elbow. The writer of the letter adds, 'all these things are very secret.' In this manner she (Queen Elizabeth) contrived to lay the fastest hold on her able servants, and her servants on her."

It is related further of this pigmy, that when the dying Queen refused to go to bed, he told her that she *must* do so. "Must, little man!" said Elizabeth; "must is not a word to use to princes."

James I. thoroughly understood the value and the follies of the pigmy, and in scorn nicknamed him "my little beagle." But the British Solomon not only gave a name to his favourite, for he also granted him Hatfield House in exchange for Theobald's at Cheshunt, and the "little beagle" rebuilt the former royal palace in which Queen Elizabeth had lived.

The two streets which, placed at right angles to each other, constitute the quaint old-time village of Hatfield, are dominated by the great house that towers above them on the summit of the highest of the many hillocks

through which the river Lea winds its way towards the Thames.

In the old palace Lady Jane Grey was born, and there Edward VI. studied and amazed his tutors by his solid learning. Here, too, the Princess Elizabeth was kept in captivity, although her confinement was lightened by such pastimes as were provided by her custodian in defiance of the Queen.

A garden-hat and a pair of tortoiseshell tea-caddies that once belonged to the Maiden Queen are among the curiosities still preserved at Hatfield House.

Not only did the "little beagle" rebuild Hatfield House, but, by the favour of King James, he became Lord Cecil of Essendene in 1603, Viscount Cranbourne in 1604, and Earl of Salisbury in 1605, seven years before his death.

The second Earl was a friend of Cromwell, and a resolute supporter of the great Protector's policy.

In 1789 the seventh Earl was made a Marquis; his son married Frances, the daughter of Mr. Bamber Gascoyne, and prefixed his wife's name to his own. This, the second, Marquis, held office more than once during his lifetime, and with considerable credit and success. Of the three sons and two daughters who called him father, the eldest died in 1865, and the youngest, Lord Eustace Cecil, has long been eminent for his missionary and religious zeal. One of the daughters married Mr. Beresford Hope and the other Mr. Balfour.

Lord Robert Cecil, the subject of this sketch, went

from Eton to Oxford without exciting great notice among his schoolfellows, for then he was only somebody's brother. The best life is that which does not excite observation by eccentricity, but which without self-assertion does its duty well.

"Perhaps the boy is happiest," said Mackonochie, "who is more or less commonplace; whose growth is gradual, and whose conceptions of right and wrong are unexaggerated; and who fights his battles, as boys do, without counting up his victories; who is somewhat shamefaced as to his virtues, and not apt to dwell upon his sins."

In 1847 Lord Robert entered at Christ Church, Oxford, and two years afterwards he took his degree. At the University he distinguished himself by his skill in debate, and it was subsequently remembered with interest that he had condemned the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII., and had pleaded against the proposed disestablishment of the Church under the present Queen; and, without knowing that in so doing he was outlining his own career, he pleaded for the establishment of a strong Conservative party, which, without condoning Peel's conduct, should accept Free Trade as unalterable.

From Oxford Lord Robert went on a tour through the British Colonies, a wise and helpful discipline and preparation for one whose name will be long remembered as one of the greatest Foreign Ministers England has ever had since Elizabeth's days.

After this time Lord Cecil was elected Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, and on the 22nd of August 1853 he was elected member of Parliament for Stamford, the original home of his family.

In the appeal he then addressed to the electors, Lord Robert Cecil avowed himself a Conservative, "although not, of course, objecting to make such cautious changes as lapse of time or improvements in science or the dispensations of Providence may render necessary."

"It will be my duty," he added, "and I shall, if I have the honour of being elected, direct my best endeavours to resist any such tampering with our representative system as shall disturb the balance of reciprocal powers on which the stability of our Constitution rests, and to obtain a due adjustment of general and local taxation under the new commercial system, so as to press fairly on all classes alike in a proportion measured by their just claims, and not by their relative strength. I am a sincere and warmly-attached member of the Church of England, and therefore I shall be ready at all times to support any measure which will increase her usefulness and render the number of her bishops and clergy more nearly equal to her requirements."

As a necessary condition of increased pastoral oversight, Lord Cecil pleaded for an extension of religious, as distinguished from godless, education, and concluded his speech with the following significant

sentence :—"I am anxious to give my best assistance in forwarding those numerous measures tending to social and sanitary improvement and the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes which are often passed by amid the din of mere party politics, but on which the future prosperity of the country so largely depends."

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE RANKS TO UHLAN SERVICE.

“We do but guess
At one another darkly 'mid the stir
That thickens round us ; in this life of ours
We are like players, knowing not the powers
Nor compass of the instruments we vex,
And by our rash, unskilful touch perplex
To straining discord, needing still the key
To seek, and all our being heedfully
To trace to one another's.”—DORA GREENWELL.

“To think we are able is almost to be so ; to determine upon attainment is frequently attainment itself. This earnest resolution has often seemed to have about it almost a savour of omnipotence.”—SAMUEL SMILES.

1853-1861.

A SMALL BOAT IN A GREAT SEA—LATH-AND-PLASTER MEN—UNIVERSITY REFORM—PIANOS OR POWERS—A QUESTION OF BUNTING—SAVING PALMERSTON—“THERE WAS A PALMERSTON”—LORD CECIL AS A REFORMER—FIGHTING GLADSTONE.

It is said of the Breton mariners, that when they put out to sea their prayer usually is, “Keep me, O God ; my boat is so small and Thy ocean is so wide.” A petition most suitable for every soul venturing out into

the vast unknown of duty and realising its own helplessness; and especially wise on the lips of a young man beginning for himself that struggle with winds and waves that we call life. That it is not more frequently offered is because we either forget the size of our boat, or mistake as to the strength of the forces with which we are compelled to struggle. Certainly the petition was most appropriate upon the lips of the new member for Stamford, who entered Parliament under conditions of no ordinary difficulty. The policy, or rather imperious want of policy, shown by Sir Robert Peel in forcing Free Trade upon his followers had rent his party beyond all hope of reunion. The fact that Free Trade was absolutely necessary and could not be effectually resisted, did not make it one whit more palatable to those who had been taught by Peel himself to view it with dread and abhorrence as pernicious and as tampering with rights that were almost divine. And the manner in which they were bidden to forego their pledges given heartily at the polls, and to vote for what they had all along disliked, irritated the squires and gentry, who were unwilling to be driven like slaves by any man, however able, and chafed when they were compelled to obey the mandate of an imperious and cold dictator. Peel was a man who did himself a great injustice; his unapproachableness may be regarded as, in some sense, a misfortune, but it was also a fault to which he too readily succumbed. At times this reserve was most advantageous, and in a measure it

promoted his designs, but upon the whole the lack of warmth may be named as the chief defect in Peel's intellectual organisation. It rendered his rule intolerable, and hastened his fall when the blow was struck by Disraeli who had resolved to terminate Peel's supremacy. The great leader fell the victim of a mutiny, and his death prevented a reconciliation between those who had rebelled against his authority and those who had steadily adhered to his fortunes.

The Coalition Ministry that had assumed office in 1852 seemed to render Lord Robert Cecil's rapid advance almost an impossibility. Few men saw at the time that the Ministry of all the talents was equally the Ministry of all the vices, and could not exist long. It was indeed a lath-and-plaster construction; it looked like stone, but the touch of a hostile stick would soon destroy the shape and form that veiled a void; and even if it were untouched, in time it must crumble and fall. The Crimean War was the strain that tried it, and rapidly the lath and plaster gave way, to the shame of those who had praised and trusted in it. It cannot be too often repeated that lath and plaster cannot be expected to last long—that lath-and-plaster reputations and achievements are not worth the trouble they cost in construction.

In February 1854 war was declared with Russia, but the lath-and-plaster Government was not crushed at the first strain. Lord Robert Cecil sustained without indorsing the action of the Ministry, whose con-

fidence in the speedy termination of the war he, as the nation did generally, supposed to be well grounded. Alas! the blunders and follies of the Coalition cost England dearly. But before the truth was fully known as to the real condition of the army in the Crimea, Lord Robert Cecil had made his maiden speech in Parliament, and upon the congenial subject of University Reform.

A Royal Commission, appointed in 1850, had recommended certain radical changes in the management of the national seats of learning; their report was published in 1852, and after two years of meditation Lord John Russell made up his mind and introduced a Bill into the House which was intended to give to these suggestions the force of law. The second reading of this measure was fixed for 7th April 1854, when Lord Robert Cecil opposed the Bill.

He commenced his speech by admitting that the University of Oxford certainly required reform, because, he said, he was too well aware of the tendency of those who had the control of such institutions to rest and be thankful without heeding the great changes that take place in other departments of the State. It is in the nature of corporations, and indeed their very purpose, to remain stable, and, like the groynes on the sea-beach, to check the shifting sands, but they require altering as the tides change. After which admission the speaker urged that the University should be invited to cleanse her own house before others were bidden to arrange her furniture and assign her apart-

ments according to their individual ideas of right and propriety. He said that instead of consulting the heads of Houses as to the contemplated changes, the Government had ignored their wishes and wished to proceed solely upon its own lines. As a consequence of which action all the colleges were to be treated alike, and all were individually and collectively to be punished for the faults of some among their number, whose shortcomings were well known, and who could and should have been isolated and reformed.

"It might be true," he said, "that some colleges had broken their statutes, but this was by no means the case with all. Magdalen and Corpus might have violated their statutes, but was that a reason for punishing Worcester and All Souls' that had not? You might as well disfranchise Liverpool because Hull is corrupt."

After pointing out the fragmentary character of the proposed remedial legislation, Lord Robert indicated the chief defect of the measure in the following words: "What seems to me the main objection to the Bill is that it sweeps away at one blow all the preferences which the founders of colleges have shown for the place of their birth, all the preferences for the schools with which they were ever connected, and all the preferences for kindred, with the exception of one, the generosity of which could not fail to be appreciated—it proposes to admit the lineal descendants of the founders. This exception is little better than an

insult, for, with two exceptions, I believe not one of the founders have left lineal descendants at all. An honourable gentleman, who supported the confiscation of fellowships, argued that the founder had no right to tie up the property for generations and for centuries. But then if that is so, the analogy of private estates ought to be followed, and if the will of the founder is to be overturned, let the property return to the heir in the natural course of law."

Setting aside the reasons for rejecting the Bill which were derivable from the Constitution, the speaker urged that the universities could be defended from spoliation "on a narrower and mere commercial ground, which, I think, would appeal more closely to popular sympathies; namely, that if we squander in this manner the endowments of the founders, we shall have no more endowments to deal with again."

The speech won approval from those who were opposed to the speaker, and it gave Lord Robert an authority and influence in the House seldom acquired by a speaker so early in his Parliamentary career. Among others, Mr. Gladstone spoke approvingly of the speech and of the youthful member. He said—"If in former times Oxford has presented Parliament with the illustrious names of Mr. Fox, Mr. Canning, and Sir Robert Peel, it has been no common gratification to me to have listened to-night to the first efforts of two members of this House—the honourable member for Tavistock (Lord Enfield) and the noble

Lord the member for Stamford, whose first efforts, rich with future promise, indicate that there still issue forth from the maternal bosom of that university men who, in the first days of their career, give earnest of what they may afterwards accomplish for their country."

These generous words were most timely, for every man is conscious in the first heat of success of a nervous sense of failure. The consciousness of what might have been done, and the self-distrust that seems instinctive to success, only yield to a kindly encouragement from one who has himself succeeded. His praise acts as a tonic, bracing the energies, preventing recoil, and awakening a resolution that may accomplish a greater spring. To help a friend thus to reap the full fruits of victory is generous, just as it is the unpardonable sin of society to debilitate yet more a soul timid from recent defeat.

Lord Robert Cecil was wise enough after this encouraging début to wait for a suitable opportunity before he made another bid for fame. The heroic Gordon wrote in his journal: "We are pianos, events play upon us. Gladstone is no more important in the events of life than we are; the importance is how he acts when played upon." Which is only partially correct, for we have free will, and can act as we choose within certain limits. Yet are we greatly dependent upon the blunders or achievements of others, which act upon us to bring out the music that is latent in the meanest soul. To allow the right influence at the

right time to run over the keyboard is the wise man's wisdom, for then the fingers of God make us harmonious in His orchestra of love. The foolish man does not submit to this, and the note that does not move becomes fixed and useless. To Lord Robert came the chance, and that in connection with the ill-fated Crimean War. A conference of the European Powers was held at Vienna, at which the English plenipotentiaries sought to limit the power of Russia in the Black Sea, while at the same time they secured for Turkey a place among the Christian Powers. Russia replied bluntly that she could not consent to the first proposal, because to do so would be to forfeit her national honour. "We do not want Turkey," said Russia. "We would be glad to maintain the Sultan, but we know it is impossible—he must perish. We are resolved not to allow any other Power to have Constantinople; we must not have the door to our dominions in the Black Sea closed against us."

After a torrent of eloquence had been wasted, Russia made some slight concessions, which left her still free where she most desired liberty, and the Powers were content. Mr. Disraeli characterised the conference as a "subterfuge of negotiations and ministerial trifling."

In contrast to the undecided shilly-shallying conduct of the Ministry, Lord Robert Cecil urged that, instead of attempting to humiliate Russia, a measure certain to produce a proportionate retaliation in the

future, it would be wise to allow that Power to display her bunting wherever it might gratify her pride or convenience to so decorate the masts of her ships; that to forbid a given flag the right to sun itself was foolish, especially as the Czar felt that the said few yards of calico when displayed was immensely to his honour and glory. Lord Robert Cecil suggested that the Sultan, now admitted among the Christian Powers, might be required to render some slight service in return for all that England had suffered on his behalf. Weak as he was, the Sultan might, he thought, be safely intrusted with the key of the Straits, with permission to close them against ships of war when he deemed it needful to do so, always supposing, of course, that the ships of war would obey him. Unhappily the unnatural anxiety about the Turk, or the equally unreasonable dislike of Russia, prevented the acceptance of a course which would have prevented, at least, one humiliation of recent years.

The inquiry made by the Commission appointed by Parliament to inquire into the conduct of the military authorities in the Crimea, the threat of which had terrified Lord John Russell, at length terminated, and not at all to the comfort of those who had not Russell's prudence in running away at sight of the rod. Mr. Roebuck, who, inspired with an acid patriotism, was equally ready to burn either friends or foes, avowed his purpose to prosecute all who had been proved guilty of the crime of starving or otherwise ill-treating the unhappy

English army. This was, of course, regarded as a fearful infatuation on the part of those who viewed private soldiers as born to be butchered at the will of official blunderers and titled incapables; but the nation was with Mr. Roebuck when he declared, "It is said that we have got rid of all the elements of the Administration that were mischievous. That I am very far from believing. It is also said, 'Are not Aberdeen and Newcastle and Herbert and Gladstone out? And what more can you expect or do you want? Do you want to see everybody punished?' I say, yes, every one who has been proved guilty."

Of course, the plain duty of Her Majesty's Opposition was to support Mr. Roebuck, to turn out the Ministers, to adopt their policy, and to retain office as long as possible.

Two members of the Opposition, General Peel and Lord Robert Cecil, did not so understand their duty, and they on their own responsibility interposed with an amendment by which Parliament permitted Palmerston to remain Premier, without expressing any opinion as to his conduct during the war. It was, in fact, releasing him from custody that he might come up for judgment when called for.

This comforting resolution, carried by a majority of 107, assured Lord Palmerston's supremacy, and in 1856 he concluded peace with Russia upon conditions that were subsequently repudiated.

Lord Palmerston, with rare prudence, continued after

the Crimean War to brag and bluster only in Europe, reserving actual combat for those nations we might reasonably expect to crumple up by threats, or about whom few members of Parliament knew, or cared to know, much.

The dispute about the lorcha *Arrow* (which is told in detail elsewhere) permitted him to make a little war on a great nation with great lustre to the English Premier. With strange perversity, Gladstone and some other members of Parliament refused to see what was very evident to Lord Shaftesbury (who regarded Palmerston as almost inspired), and as the malcontents contrived to inoculate others with their foolish notions, the Premier appealed to the country against them.

Lord Robert Cecil was once more duly elected for Stamford without opposition, and with Sir F. Thesiger as his colleague. On the 27th of March 1857, in returning thanks for this renewed mandate, Lord Robert Cecil urged his opinion that great reforms were required in the social condition of the people, many of whom were born to perpetual misery and degrading bondage, unrelieved by either hope in this world or a prospect of happiness in the next. To alleviate the social miseries, and animate these sufferers with hope sufficient to induce them to help themselves, religious education alone was effectual. Lord Robert Cecil had not, and has not yet, come to admire the education that ignores the Bible and objects to the Scriptures as

it objects to the income or dog tax. When the new Parliament met on the 6th of April 1857, nothing seemed lacking to assure Palmerston of a life-long lease of power.

Lord Cecil in this session suggested that, instead of the ballot, voting papers should be distributed, which, if signed in the presence of a magistrate, would, he saw, bring the poll to the electors instead of dragging them to the polls. Whether inspired by a distrust of the magistrates or some other occult reason, it brooks not to ask, but suffice it to say that the suggested reform was not adopted.

Lord Salisbury, in 1857, was married to Georgina, daughter of Sir E. H. Alderson, one of Her Majesty's judges, senior wrangler, first Smith's prizeman, and first Chancellor's medalist, and the best mathematician and the best classic of his year.

While Lord Robert Cecil was enjoying his honeymoon, Lord Palmerston was faring badly : to his surprise and mortification, he was summarily dismissed from the Cabinet for insubordination, and, after the manner of discharged servants, he retaliated upon those who had procured him his disgrace. At the time of his expulsion the opinion was very general that his days of power were over for ever. Disraeli truly expressed the popular judgment when he said, "*There was a Palmerston.*"

But the fallen Minister was elastic ; he recovered himself, and he retaliated by ejecting the Ministers

responsible for his downfall from the power he could not share with them.

Lord Derby became Premier after the expulsion of Lord John Russell, and during his dominion, which was more or less titular, because dependent upon the disagreement of Palmerston and Russell, Lord Robert Cecil brought forward the thorny question of Church-rates, and also the no less perplexing problem as to the Danubian Principalities.

During the same year of 1858 Lord Robert Cecil also published in the Oxford Essays his views upon Parliamentary Reform. At that time few imagined that the writer, without assuming the name of Reformer, would accomplish one of the greatest social revolutions of modern times. A Gascon proverb says, "Who at twenty does nothing; who at thirty knows nothing; who at forty has nothing; who at fifty changes nothing, for him there is no hope." Under neither clause can Lord Cecil be convicted; it is interesting, therefore, to learn his views on Reform at the mature age of twenty-eight.

Lord Robert Cecil arranged the claimants to the conveniently indefinite title of Reformer into three classes. For himself, he desired to see a practical rather than an ideal scheme, a desire not common either to the Educational, Geographical, or the Symmetrical Reformers, as he termed them. The first were the pedants, who proposed to confer reform upon selected and duly prepared specimens of humanity who were

certified as being intellectually capable of receiving and utilising the priceless boon, which was thus put upon the level with the winter blankets and rice still doled out to the decent poor in some rural districts. Yet in requiring some guarantee that the franchise would not be abused, the Educationists were right, but, like all monomaniacs, they neglected to provide means whereby the worthy should be crammed, as also they were unable to decide if the ability to spell words of three or of five syllables were a sufficient proof of intellectual fitness to vote. From the knowledge of the multiplication-table upwards there was ample room for a limit which was prudently not fixed.

The Geographical Reformers were those who are now known as the "one man one vote" advocates, which process has been termed counting noses. Against this theory it has been urged that men should be weighed rather than counted, and that to settle all questions by the mere accident of numbers is unwise.

While acknowledging this, Lord Cecil said that he saw no objection to a wide extension of the franchise, providing, of course, that additional votes were assigned as a safeguard to property.

The last division comprised all who imagined that the Constitution should be like a deal box, four-square, smooth, and void of beauty.

Lord Robert thus summed up his argument—"The result, then, to which a review of the Reformers' arguments inevitably leads us is, that we must either

change enormously or not at all. It is undoubtedly to be desired that every anomaly should be removed at which hostile critics can laugh or cavil; still more, that every person in the kingdom should have exactly his just share, and no more than his just share, in the government of the country. On the other hand, it is of vital importance that the Legislature should not be deteriorated or the safety of property endangered. A system of representation might doubtless be devised in which all these objects should be regularly and exactly attained; but most statesmen will hesitate before they prefer a paper constitution to the time-hardened trusty machine whose working they have thoroughly tried. But to remove one evil without removing that which is its counterpoise, to withdraw one poison from the prescription without withdrawing the other which is its antidote, is the maddest course of all. Political justice to one side and not to the other is more than a set-off of injustice on both sides; political symmetry on a faulty plan is worse than chaos. Better far to reconstruct the whole; better still, to let that which has worked well work on. But whichever course is taken, the condition in the representative system which it is our duty to maintain, even at the cost of any restriction in any anomaly, is that the intellectual status of the Legislature shall not be lowered, and that sufficient weight, direct or indirect, shall be given to property to secure it from the possibility of harm."

This essay, in the words of Mr. Trail, clearly ranked the writer "among those plainer-spoken sections of the Tory party who, while admitting that our electoral system was theoretically open to improvement, made no concealment of their opinion that it were better left alone."

The question thus discussed seemed at the time hardly within the range of practical politics, but the exigencies of the party he led soon afterwards compelled the Conservative leader to take a step he could not have approved. For in the year 1859, Disraeli, uneasy as to the duration of his lease of power, made a desperate bid for popularity by introducing a Reform Bill which hugely resembled a jest. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Disraeli was in earnest in his scheme, but the grim joke did not aid him in his designs. The House of Commons first laughed at and then rejected the Bill, and Lord Derby appealed to the constituencies against the naughty Commons. The electors emphatically condemned the new departure, and once more placed Lord Palmerston in office. With him Mr. Gladstone was again associated, and this time as Chancellor of the Exchequer. The story of the new Administration is related in another volume of the present series, and need not be detailed here, except that the conflict over the repeal of the paper duty, which brought Lord Robert Cecil into the front rank of Conservative debaters, must be noticed. Mr. Gladstone proposed, by the addition of one penny to

the income-tax, to liberate paper from the crippling taxes that had perhaps been needful in the old war times of ignorance and suffering.

The Lords threw out the Bill, and perhaps were within their technical right in so doing ; but certainly few people will justify the attempt of the peers to continue a tax that had been declared by the responsible Minister to be no longer necessary.

Lord Palmerston failed to render his colleague effectual support, but he certainly could not have been ignorant of the device whereby, in 1861, Mr. Gladstone prevented a second defeat at the hands of the peers. This was by combining all the Budget proposals of the year in one Bill. Upon this plan Lord Robert Cecil said—

“Nothing can be more vain or futile than the device by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer attempts to fetter the action of the House of Lords for future years. It seems to me that the right hon. gentleman the member for Birmingham, and others who take a strong view against the House of Lords, wholly mistake the question of last year. They seem to imagine the position was one of jurisdiction, that the two Houses were fighting in the arena by themselves, and that there was no one else whose behests they ought to consider and obey. The Government seem to think it was a fight of procedure, and favour, and precedents. We are accused of reaction on this side of the House. It is said we fancy we are living

in past centuries, and that we are applying to the present the passion of the past. But in listening to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we might be excused for thinking that we are still living and fighting in the days of the Stuarts. They do not see that behind and acting through the House of Lords there was the great educated public opinion of the country, of which that House, and this House too, are merely the vehicles and instruments; and not seeing that, they imagine that the fight will be settled by a conflict simply between the two Houses, and that they can fetter the action of the House of Lords by an ingenious device. Why, sir, if the occasion should again happen—which I pray may not be the case—that the House of Commons should act so madly and improperly as it acted last year, and that it should call down upon itself the condemnation of the public, the House of Lords will not be fettered by this or any form from taking its legitimate operation. Suppose that the case of last year happened again; that the House of Commons, making no provision for the wants of the year, had left the country with a gigantic deficit. What then? The House of Lords would alter the single Bill sent to them. They would strike out the clauses remitting duties and send the Bill down again. And what would you do then? It would be painful to you. You would make many loud and angry speeches on the subject; but if the opinion of the country was against you and with the House of Lords,

you would again have to submit. You would have to renew the Bill with the absence of the obnoxious clauses, and send the Bill back in a penitent mood, and thus your new device would only fall upon yourselves — an additional humiliation. On the other hand, if the public opinion of the country did not support the House of Lords, the House of Lords are far too prudent ever to slight the House of Commons. But while you are so careful of the power of the House of Lords, no one seems to think that this new desire will to a great extent withdraw the proposition of the Government from the discussion of the House of Commons. The wisdom of our ancestors provided that the detail of every financial measure should be considered first in committee, then at the second reading again in committee, again on the third reading, and still again on the proposition that the Bill do pass. On all these occasions we have opportunities of discussion and amendment. But this is a desire to put a stop to that in the Lords, and to lose no opportunity of discussing this question without resorting to the almost revolutionary measure of rejecting the Budget altogether. But when pursuing such a shadow we are inflicting a damage on our own House. The right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gladstone) told us the other night that he could not understand the opposition we had to his proposal, because he had brought it forward in a spirit of conciliation. I told him that he was

keeping up a quarrel which had existed too long, and that he must know perfectly well the reason of our opposing the measure. We oppose it as we must oppose any measure that may injure the revenue, and leave the most of future years desolate of promise. But this is not all. We know that this measure has a special political character. It is the purchase-money of a political bargain. It is the hush-money to the stern and watchful guardians of the public interest to induce them to endure the backslidings of others in a new direction. I am not surprised that the right hon. gentleman should take advantage of the opportunity and offer hush-money that costs him so little, but I am surprised at the easy virtue that is satisfied with so paltry a bribe. But at all events, he cannot expect us to be passive witnesses of such a bargain carried out by such means, and having for its effect results so detrimental to the Exchequer and to the country."

This was strong language; but on the second reading of the Bill Lord Robert Cecil went still further. He said—

"Sir, often as I have heard the strangest and the strongest statements from the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am absolutely aghast at the audacity which he has exhibited on the present occasion. What the Government are now proposing is to subdue the House of Lords. This is the stage at which the Government intend to obtain

power to take a course hitherto unprecedented in our financial legislation for half a century. It has been the practice hitherto to divide all measures of finance into separate Bills, and to send them up separately to the House of Lords; but now, for a special political object, to avenge a special political defeat, to gratify a special pique, and to gain the votes of a special political section, it is proposed to vary the practice of half a century; and yet the right hon. gentleman stands at this table and tells us he is proposing to take the usual and invariable course. At this hour—half-past twelve—it is not the proper time to discuss whether the right hon. gentleman has taken the proper method to override the independent judgment of the House of Lords, nor whether that attempt is likely to succeed or to reflect credit on the House of Commons or on the Government that proposes it. This, however, is the lever that is to alter the Constitution. I believe that the measure will be utterly futile, that it will leave the Constitution exactly as it finds it, and thus the power of the House of Lords to check the infatuation of the House of Commons will be entirely unaltered. Whether the course we are asked to take is wise or not, it is too important, and goes too deeply into the principles of the British Constitution, to be determined at this late hour of the night. I therefore only rise to protest against the right hon. gentleman's attempt to impose this proceeding upon us as the ordinary routine of financial procedure. He is, on the

contrary, taking a course which is perfectly unusual, and to which, I am persuaded, the House will not give its consent."

Mr. Disraeli expressed the warmest approval of his lieutenant's speech. He said—

"I confess I have listened with satisfaction to the noble Lord both last night and to-night, as it appeared to me that I had never heard constitutional opinions expressed in more effective language. I trust that on Thursday he will be able to take that part in our debates in which, I think, he has greatly distinguished himself."

There had, in fact, arisen among the Conservatives a man who to the vehemence of Lord Derby united the vigour and self-restraint that are more usual in Englishmen. The biting wit and pungent phraseology employed by the new speaker concealed, and perhaps marred, more stable elements of power; but it only required time and experience to correct the evil and mature the good qualities that have since been so eminent in Lord Salisbury.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TO THE PAINTED CHAMBER.

"We cast a longer shadow in the sun !
And now a charm, and now a grace is won !
We grow in stature, and in wisdom too !
And as new scenes, new objects rise to view,
Think nothing done while aught remains to do."

—ROGERS.

"The weakest living creature, by concentrating his powers on a single object, can accomplish something. The strongest, by dispersing his over many, may fail to accomplish anything."—CARLYLE.

1861-1867.

A NEW ENEMY—A TARIFF OF INSOLENCE—FROM THE RANKS TO
A FRONT PLACE—SECRETARY FOR INDIA—VIEWS ON REFORM
—THE TEN MINUTES' BILL—THE DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE
IRISH CHURCH—ELEVATED TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

WHEN Ferdinand first heard of Gustavus Adolphus, it is said that he exclaimed, "Ah ! we have a new little enemy, have we ?" He did not accurately estimate the ability and resources of the new antagonist that had arisen to trouble him, or perhaps he felt confident in his own abilities and resources. Such a blunder is common and often serious. In Lord Robert Cecil the Government of Lord Palmerston had a new little

enemy, whose vigour was only equalled by his vigilance, but they were not so foolish as to despise him.

The foreign policy of England was especially open to attack, for while the action of Brazil in arresting some drunken naval officers who had been guilty of brawling brought the two countries to the verge of war, Palmerston exhibited unparalleled subservience to the great Powers, whom it might be dangerous to bully. "It appears to me," said Lord Robert Cecil with truth, "as if Earl Russell adopted a sort of tariff of insolence in his correspondence with foreign Powers."

The Polish insurrection furnished a flagrant example of this pusillanimity, and one that seriously damaged English credit on the Continent.

In the year 1861 some 3000 Poles had assembled for the purpose of singing hymns in honour of their departed heroes, and while so engaged they were ruthlessly charged by the Russian cavalry. Many of these unarmed Poles were killed, more were wounded, and large numbers were flung into prison. This massacre, for it was little else, excited the national spirit and provoked further demonstrations on the part of the Poles, which in turn were suppressed with relentless cruelty.

The intense hatred provoked by these acts of tyranny induced many wealthy Poles to resign the commissions that they had held in the Russian army,

while their poorer brethren deserted in large numbers from the Czar's banner. The oppression grew worse, and at length the Poles rose in a desperate attempt to win their liberty. The revolt spread from one district to another, until eventually the whole nation was in arms. The Russians prosecuted the war with merciless severity. Whole villages were destroyed, and atrocities almost as terrible as those that have made Bulgaria a byword excited both the disgust and sympathy of Europe.

Many leading Englishmen, among whom was Lord Robert Cecil, urged the wisdom of British intervention on behalf of the Poles, but beyond a feeble protest, which only provoked an insolent retort from Russia, nothing was done. Russia restored order after her traditional method, Poland disappeared, and Europe has since suffered for its complicity in the cruel injustice then perpetrated.

In 1864 the conduct of the Ministry in encouraging Denmark to expect assistance from England, which was denied her when she really required it, provoked a vote censuring Palmerston and his subordinates. In the course of this debate Lord Cecil said—

“Whether or not any good will come to Denmark from the passing of this motion, at all events one thing remains—if we cannot save Denmark, we may at least rescue England from the danger of suffering further dishonour for the future. We can record upon the journals of the House a condemnation of the offence of

those who betrayed Denmark and brought England into contempt; and we can rescue the country from the danger to which it is exposed during every hour that a Ministry which has shown so low an appreciation of the national honour is suffered to continue in office."

Probably the great majority of the English people were in sympathy with the vote of censure, although of course party ties prevented some members of Parliament from acting on their convictions. For it was not the least of the offences chargeable upon Lord Palmerston, that he demoralised both his party and Parliament. He distinctly lowered the standard of political morality; it was therefore needful to protest against his swaggering jocularly when protest was all that could be done to neutralise it.

On the 14th of June 1865, Lord Robert Cecil succeeded to the title of Viscount Cranborne upon the death of his elder brother.

On the 6th of the following month Parliament was dissolved. The *Times*, in reviewing the merits and claims of various candidates for Cabinet rank, said—

"Lord Cranborne, better known as Lord Robert Cecil, brings great ability to the support of his party. Industrious, pugnacious, vigorous, and eloquent, Lord Cranborne has since the beginning of the Parliament made his way from comparative obscurity into the front ranks of Parliament. His occasional rashness requires

to be tempered by experience, but the virtues of prudence and moderation are more possible of attainment than the ability which is only given at birth."

At the ensuing election Viscount Cranborne was once more returned as member for Stamford. In returning thanks for his appointment, he said that—"In our foreign policy what we have to do is simply to perform our own part with honour, to abstain from a meddling diplomacy, to uphold England's honour steadily and fearlessly, and always to be rather prone to let action go along with words than to let it lag behind them."

The electors gave the Whigs a majority, but before the new Parliament had commenced its labours Lord Palmerston had died, and Mr. Gladstone had become leader of the House of Commons, and therefore virtually Premier. The history of his Administration has been told elsewhere, but it should be noticed that on the 12th of March 1866 Mr. Gladstone introduced his Reform Bill. His own natural imperiousness, and a singular want of tact in his method of expounding his plans, invited attack, which, it must be said, was only too readily delivered. Viscount Cranborne joined in the combat, and cheerfully assisted in inflicting upon the Ministry a series of defeats that eventually drove them from power.

On the motion for the second reading of the Reform Bill, Lord Cranborne said—"Before entering into the

discussion of this Bill, it appears to be necessary that we should make our confession of faith with respect to the working-men. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has thrown imputations of the gravest and most damaging character on all members on this side of the House, and indeed upon all those who support the amendment of the noble Earl. He was not content with throwing these imputations in the House itself, where, indeed, they appeared in a milder and more modified form, but when the debate was adjourned, as has been said, from this House to another place, and when the right hon. gentleman went down to Lancashire, where there were no opponents to answer him, and where he could make what statements he pleased without fear of being contradicted, he made accusations of a most damaging character against those who oppose this Bill. He told his audience that members on this side of the House readily and earnestly accepted the imputation that they treated the working-classes as an invading army. Now, I venture to say there is not the slightest foundation for the imputation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer threw upon us. When first he made it, I protested against it, because I, in common with my hon. friend the member for Stoke, were the only speakers who followed the right hon. gentleman in the debate, and I concluded that by some strange misapprehension he had drawn from our words that we accepted that most damaging imputation. I have since ascertained, how-

ever, that it was not from our words that the right hon. gentleman drew the imputation he made against us, but solely, it appears, from the interpretation he was pleased to put on a cheer which he thought he heard from this side of the House. The right hon. gentleman had remarked in his speech that we looked on the working classes as an invading army. And if the right. hon. gentleman imagined at the time that he heard from this side of the House some inarticulate assent to that proposition—a fact which I believe is absolutely destitute of foundation—why did he not attempt to fix the odious charge at the moment when it could be contradicted and disproved? But he goes down to Liverpool, and there, before a select audience of his friends, admitted by ticket, tells them in effect that the Conservative party looked upon the working-classes as an invading army. Now, it does not seem to me that such conduct is consistent with the obligations which a leader of the House of Commons ought to accept. If the leader of this House has occasion to impute to any of its members opinions which he deeply censures, it is on the floor of this House, and on the floor of this House alone, that he ought to impute these sentiments to them. I venture to say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may search the annals of the House of Commons in vain to find a precedent for the leader of this House going down to a provincial audience, and telling them that those who oppose him in debate are guilty of sentiments

on which he casts the gravest censure. I followed the right hon. gentleman in order to make my protest against the use of such weapons as he had resorted to with reference to the working-classes. Sometimes we are told we distrust them, sometimes that we insult them, sometimes that we detest them, sometimes that we are anxious to exclude them from all share in the political government of the country. I can quite understand, when you have nothing to say for your Bill, and nothing to say against the amendment, it is very convenient to shower dirt on those who oppose the measure; but I will venture to say that the right hon. gentleman cannot obtain from the words of any speeches on this side of the House anything to justify the odious charge he has made against us. For myself, I will venture to make my confession of faith on the subject of the working-classes. I feel there are two tendencies to avoid. I have heard much on the subject of the working-classes in this House, which, I confess, has filled me with feelings of some apprehension. It is the belief of many hon. gentlemen opposite that the working-classes are to be our future sovereign; that they are to be the great power in the State, against which no other power will be able to stand; and it is with feelings of no small horror and disgust that I have heard from many hon. gentlemen phrases which sound, I hope unduly, like adulation of the sovereign they expect to reign over them. Now, if there is one

claim which the House of Commons has on the respect of the people of this country, it is the great historic fame it enjoys; if it has done anything to establish the present balance of power among all classes of the community, and prevent any single element in the constitution from overpowering the rest, it is that in the presence of all powers, however great and terrible they may have been, the House of Commons has always been free and independent in its language. It never in past times, when kings were powerful, fawned upon them; it has always resisted their unjust pretences; it always refused to allow any courtierly instincts to repress in it that solicitude for the freedom of the people of this country which it was instituted to cherish. I should deeply regret if, at a time when it is said we are practically about to change our sovereign, and when some may think that new powers are about to rule over the country, a different spirit were to inspire and influence the House of Commons. Nothing could be more dangerous to the reputation of the House, nothing more fatal to its authority, than that it should be suspected of sycophancy to any power, either from above or below, that is likely to become predominant in the State. My own feeling with respect to the working-men is simply this: we have heard a great deal too much of them, as if they were different from other Englishmen. I do not understand why the nature of the poor or working men in this country should be different from that of any other Englishmen.

They spring from the same race; they live under the same climate; they are brought up under the same laws; they aspire after the same historical model we admire ourselves; and I cannot understand why their nature is to be thought better or worse than that of other classes. I say, their nature; but I say nothing of their temptations. If you apply to any class of the community special temptation, you will find that class addicted to special vices. And that is what I fear you are doing now. You are not recognising the fact that, dealing with the working-classes, you are dealing with men who are Englishmen in their nature, and who have every English virtue and vice. You are applying to them a special training, and yet refuse to look forward to the special result, which all who know human nature must inevitably expect. Those members who have sat on election committees will, I think, agree with me that the franchise is a convertible commodity. It has a value, indeed, in two ways. The franchise has a direct money value to those who do not care much about public affairs in the way of bribery. It has an indirect value to those who do care much about public affairs in the way of encouraging unjust and special class legislation. If you give the franchise to those who may naturally be tempted to misuse it, you must expect that a larger proportion, who are not deeply interested in public affairs, will be liable to the temptation—I do not say they will always yield to it—of treating it as a saleable commodity.

The minority, more influential, more deeply interested in public affairs, will be liable to the temptation of treating it, not as a saleable commodity, but as something to get for them laws with respect to taxation and property specially favourable to them, and therefore dangerous to all other classes of the community. That is the temptation to which you are exposing the working-man by giving him the franchise. I say, further, that you are exposing him to it more than other classes of the community, for this simple reason, that he is poorer. It is perfectly true that the poor have their virtues as well as the rich, and that the rich have their vices as well as the poor. But the vices of the poor have, unfortunately, a special bearing on their fitness for the exercise of political rights. The poor are liable more than the rich to be tempted if you place in their hands anything that is pecuniarily convertible. A great deal of odium has been cast on some members of this House because they have stated that the working-classes are more venal than the rich. That is not true as to their nature, but it is true as to the temptations to which they are exposed. It is ridiculous to say that £50 will not tempt a man more, of whose income it forms a third or a fourth, than one of whose income it forms only the thirtieth or the fortieth part; and therefore all bribes, whether in the direct form of money value or in the indirect form of class legislation, must be expected to operate more on the working-classes than on any other class of the

community. It is not a paradox, but a simple truism, that a man who is hungry will care more for a good dinner than one who has already dined. But, sir, that seems to me to be the simple truth about—I will not say the working-classes, for I dislike to treat any particular vocation as distinct and separate in this community—but as to those who have less property in the country. In proportion as the property is small, the danger of misusing the franchise will be great. You may cover that by sentiment. You may attempt to thrust it away by vague declamations; but, as a matter of fact and as a matter of truth, it will remain all the same. And now, sir, having spoken in this way about the working-classes, I shall sum up as far as I can what seems to me the result of the debate that we have had in respect to the amendment of the noble Earl. I do not know whether the idea may have been present to other members of this side of the House, but it appears to me that there has been, seemingly, a kind of demon that has attended all the members of the Government and speakers upon that side of the House, which has forced them, in spite of themselves, always to speak in such a way as virtually to support the amendment of the noble Earl. Everything the supporters of the Bill have said has been really an argument in favour of the amendment. Take the Government first. The Government began by holding very cavalier language on the subject of the Franchise Bill. They at first did not in the least care to deal

with the redistribution of seats. It is true the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not absolutely say so, but he used language which bore no other interpretation than that he intended to bring in the Seats Bill next year. Well, the right hon. gentleman was driven from that position, and then he said that the Seats Bill was to be brought in this year, but only formally, and then the right hon. gentleman again gave way, and stated that that Bill should be made a matter of standing or falling by the Government; and now we are told that a yet further step is to be made, and that the Seats Bill is to be pressed *pari passu* with the Franchise Bill in order to satisfy the scruples of some of the supporters of the Government. I feel a difficulty, however, in believing that statement, because as soon as I heard of it I referred back to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a former occasion, and it appeared to me that it was impossible for a statesman to give a stronger pledge that such a course should not be taken than was then given by the right hon. gentleman. And in case the Chancellor of the Exchequer should at a later period of the evening make any such announcement—which I hope for his own sake he will not do—I should like to read to the House what he said at the beginning of this debate with reference to pushing forward the Seats Bill. In moving the second reading of this Bill the right hon. gentleman spoke as follows:—
'Allowing for full and free discussion regarding the

subject, we could not expect that these two portions of it will be dealt with, and still less the other portions of it, within the ordinary and usual duration of the session; but beyond that I have stated, as is well known, that we for our parts, from motives of duty, decline to proceed with any other parts of the subject until the fate of the Franchise Bill is determined. When its fate is determined, it will then be for us to review our position.' Now, sir, if the right hon. gentleman, in spite of that declaration, should state that he will proceed with the Seats Bill *pari passu* with the Franchise Bill, that is to say, will proceed with it before the fate of this Bill is determined, he will in effect be admitting that he has departed from the motives of duty which originally actuated him; and the House will take notice that such a proceeding will entirely dispose of that question of time which the right hon. gentleman made so much of when he introduced the Bill. He then insisted strongly that there were only twenty-four nights between the 12th of April and the practical close of the session at the disposal of the Government, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, and out of these twenty-four nights twelve would be needed for the financial business of the Government. So that twelve only remained for the Reform Bill; and therefore he argued, and argued in an unanswerable way, if you once granted that he ought to have introduced the matter this session at all, that it was

impossible to proceed with the Franchise Bill and also with the Seats Bill in the present session. If, however, those rumours that are flying about are correct, and if the right hon. gentleman does pledge himself to proceed with the Seats Bill *pari passu* with the Franchise Bill, it will follow that he did not use that argument about the time of the House with any personal conviction that it was correct. I suppose the Solicitor-General for Scotland, or the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, would tell us that was part of a parliamentary manœuvre, and that it was impossible to get a majority without it; and according to the modern morality of Government, I have no doubt that the right hon. gentleman and his friends will think that a perfectly satisfactory reason for having pressed upon the House of Commons an argument which they themselves did not believe. But to use an expression once used by a friend of the right hon. gentleman's, 'I do not like to see unnecessary humiliation;' and I think that if the right hon. gentleman makes any attempt to influence votes by such a concession, he will be submitting himself to unnecessary humiliation. It is a very painful thing to see a man eat dirt at any time, but it is a much more painful thing to see a man eat dirt when you know he will not be paid for it. And my fear is that the right hon. gentleman will injure his own character and position by thus contradicting all his previous statements and falsifying all his previous arguments,

without gaining a single vote in the division that is impending, for such a course would be founded on an entire misconception of the nature of the objection that we have to the proceedings of the Government. What we want is not that the Seats Bill and the Franchise Bill should proceed *pari passu*—that is to say, one after the other; but what we want is that they should proceed together—that is to say, in one and the same Bill. We wish, indeed, for information, but information is not our main object. What we wish for is control. It is a small matter to be told what the Government will do, for the Government is not all-powerful. What we wish is that the form of the Bill shall be such that from the first to the last the House of Commons shall enjoy an undisputed and undiminished control over both branches of the subject.”

The secession of a large number of his most influential adherents probably contributed more to the defeat that Mr. Gladstone sustained than was effected by the efforts of his opponents.

Mr. Gladstone resigned, and although in a minority, Lord Derby formed a Ministry, in which Viscount Cranborne took office as Secretary of State for India. He had indeed become too valuable to be left out of office, and his appointment met with general Conservative approval.

Upon his accession to office, Lord Cranborne presented himself at Stamford for re-election, and was

again returned without opposition. His colleague, Sir Stafford Northcote, having retired and elected to sit for his native county, North Devon, Sir John Hay was associated with Lord Cranborne in the representation of Stamford.

Hitherto Lord Cranborne had been regarded as a brilliant Rupert, whose resistless charge now and then inflicted as much damage upon his own as upon his opponents' ranks. No one gave him credit for financial or administrative talent of a high order; some did not believe that he even possessed ordinary prudence and self-restraint. He now held office for too short a time to adequately display his abilities, yet he shamed his detractors and astonished his friends. For Lord Derby, who had come into power on the distinct understanding or pledge that Reform was unnecessary and impolitic, began to hint gently at a possible alteration of the franchise. Accordingly the Queen's Speech, delivered on the 5th of February 1867, announced that "attention would again be called to the state of the representation of the people in Parliament." A singular paragraph, which expressed a hope that the discussion of Reform, "conducted in a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, may lead to the adoption of measures which, without unduly disturbing the balance of political power, shall freely extend the electoral franchise," was explained to mean that the Government did not intend to resign if their demand for Reform were rejected.

In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli obligingly tabled thirteen resolutions, which in ambiguous phraseology proposed to create four new "fancy franchises," and also to lower the borough occupation rating to £6.

The Opposition thereupon heartily resolved upon resistance, and stoutly demanded a Bill instead of the resolutions. Mr. Disraeli amiably consented to oblige them, and all promised well, when, to the amazement of the happy family, Lord Cranborne and two other Cabinet Ministers resigned their posts.

It gradually leaked out that there had been two alternative schemes of Reform at one time before the Cabinet, one of which was more liberal than any demagogue had ever demanded or perhaps imagined. It indeed proposed to grant household suffrage, checked and balanced a little by additional votes which were to be assigned to property. This multiplying of votes Lord Cranborne knew would not be acceptable to the Commons, and he resolved to resign his post.

"Imagine the difficulty and embarrassment in which the Ministry found themselves placed," said Sir John Pakington, one of the perplexed statesmen, in a moment of forgetful frankness. "It was then past two o'clock; Lord Derby was to address the party at half-past two; at half-past four Mr. Disraeli was to unfold the Reform scheme before the House of Commons. Literally they had not half-an-hour; they had not more than ten minutes to make up their minds as to what course the Ministry was to adopt. The public

know the rest. They determined to propose, not the Bill agreed to on the Saturday, but an alternative measure which they had contemplated in the event of their large and liberal scheme being rejected by the House of Commons."

On the 4th of March Lord Cranborne himself described his attitude towards both Reform in general and the Ten Minutes Bill in particular.

"I am sure," he said, "that this question never will be settled if any who entertain sincere convictions against the propositions that have been made allowed the suspicion to fall upon them that for any party or personal considerations they were suppressing their own convictions and acting against them. It is only by the most perfect sincerity and by earnestly striving, each in his own sphere, as much as we can, to take this subject out of the category of those questions which tend to give rise to party struggles, that we can get rid of a difficulty which has become serious, and remove what has also in effect become a disgrace to the efficiency of the House of Commons."

The inauspicious Bill introduced under such circumstances was modified, altered, and transformed until it retained very little of its original shape. Lord Cranborne most consistently and strenuously resisted the measure, but in vain. In due time it became law, and that to the disadvantage of those who framed it. Lord Derby had hoped that by passing a Reform Bill he would have been able to have retained his party in

office for many years, but in so prophesying he had left Mr. Gladstone out of his reckoning. Mr. Gladstone, after the passage of the Reform Bill, which must have delighted his heart, by some unexplained process of reason suddenly discovered that the Church of Ireland required surgical treatment. It is, to say the least of it, remarkable that with Mr. Gladstone such discoveries are almost always made during the leisure of opposition.

Accordingly, in the heat of his new zeal, Mr. Gladstone proposed certain resolutions affirming the necessity for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of Ireland.

Lord Cranborne offered a stout opposition to the proposed change, upon the ground that, however expedient the alteration might appear or actually be, it was sinful and a violation of the Divine law. This opinion may have been mistaken, but it was at least sincere; no one of the advocates of the Irish Church presented the case for the defence so forcibly as did Lord Cranborne.

"The right hon. gentleman," he said, referring to Mr. Gladstone, "spoke of a sentiment in favour of an Established Church with respect, although he avowed that he himself had escaped from its spell and felt bound to oppose it now. I must frankly avow that I am not of his opinion, and that that sentiment still exercises a hold over me that I regard as sacred. It appears to me that there is no problem in the development of modern society more important and more diffi-

cult, and yet which touches more deeply the sacred springs of human feeling and the most important interests of human society, than the connection that exists between Church and State. Under these circumstances I cannot look upon the sentiment in favour of the Established Church as a thing to be praised but to be disregarded. This sentiment appears to me to be bound up with our national life, to enter deeply into our Constitution; and even if no higher motives restrained us, we could not, in my opinion, abandon it without imperilling all the greatness and all the material advantages of which we are so proud. And therefore, although the principle involved in that sentiment be applied to a part of the United Kingdom where it is severely tested, and where we have to rely more upon abstract principle and less upon expediency than I could have wished, still my feeling is that, even as applied to the case of Ireland, it is a principle which I will not desert. It is a principle which has done so much good in past times; it is a principle from which we may hope so much hereafter; it is a principle which I have always supported, that, even if I were inclined to doubt its soundness, it would not be in this, its moment of trial and adversity, that I would shrink from upholding it. I do not wish to go to a lower motive. I should rather choose to rely upon the importance of maintaining the connection between Church and State, and of having some organisation by public authority of higher principles than the mere

material instincts which ordinarily guide politicians. I would rather look to something more than to the ordinary dictates of political economy or to the necessities of our political organisation. But if I did seek for lower motives, I think I could easily find them. I confess that I doubt whether the object for which this great change is to be effected would be allowed, even were the sacrifice made. We seek for peace—peace, above all things, is what we desire in Ireland. And you are going to do what, to secure peace? Why, you are going to draw down upon yourselves the certain and bitter enmity of one-third of the population—the most able, the most wealthy, and the most influential portion of the population of Ireland, without your having any security whatever that you will conciliate the remainder of that population.”

This eloquent plea for the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland was the young statesman's last speech in the House of Commons, for on the 12th of April, nine days after the resolutions were passed, his father died. And on the 7th of May Lord Cranborne took his seat in the House of Lords as Marquis of Salisbury.

The *Times* thus reviewed the career which had just closed, and the words present a just tribute to Lord Salisbury's success in the House of Commons:—“He has proved himself in the Commons an orator, an administrator, and, it must be added, a thinker of the first class; and whereas others give promise

at their entrance into public life which is too often falsified in after years, the new Lord Salisbury has developed a higher character by experience and familiarity with the problems of statesmanship than even his friends at first expected. All were assured of his ability, but few could have anticipated the breadth of view he manifested during the short time in which he controlled the destinies of the Indian Empire."

CHAPTER IV.

FROM ONE SUCCESS TO GREATER VICTORIES.

“Ye who never turned your backs,
But marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
Wrong would triumph.
Held we fall to rise ; are baffled to
Fight better, sleep to awake.”

The Duke of Wellington once said to Sir William Napier, “I have fought many battles, and have acquired an instinct about them which I cannot describe, but I know how to fight a battle.”

1867-1874.

RITUAL AND THE RITUALISTS—OPPOSING THE IRISH CHURCH
SUSPENSORY BILL—THE GENERAL ELECTION—A COMPROMISE—REFORMING THE LORDS—CHANCELLOR OF OXFORD—
CRITICISING THE LIBERALS—TWTITTING THE POLITICAL ECONOMISTS—MR. GLADSTONE CENSURED—ARBITRATOR TO A
RAILWAY COMPANY—UNDERMINING THE GOVERNMENT—
DEFEAT OF THE MINISTRY.

LORD SALISBURY in the House of Lords rapidly acquired an ascendancy, due and inevitable to a man of his superlative abilities in debate. Almost his first speech was upon the question of Ritualism, in which he strenuously opposed Lord Shaftesbury.

“If ever there is a subject that requires to be treated with care and caution and deliberation,” he said, “it

is those matters which, in themselves, may be thought unimportant, but which in their bearing on the belief of religious men in this country are supremely important, and likely, if dealt with rashly and inconsiderately, to precipitate divisions. . . . It is precisely because the matters in dispute are not disputed on account of their intrinsic value, but because they are supposed to be important as symbols of the doctrines to which we all attach the deepest value; it is for that reason that they have taken a deep hold of the feeling of the country, and have excited the earnest fears and apprehensions of my noble friend; and it is on that account, I am afraid, they will excite fears and apprehensions on the other side which will produce violent dissensions in the Church of England, if violent proceedings are taken."

This skirmish was preliminary to a renewal of the war with Mr. Gladstone about the disestablishment of the Irish Church. The resolution was carried in the House of Commons, and on the 25th of June a Bill which proposed to suspend the power to make fresh appointments came up to the Lords for the second reading. Lord Salisbury, in opposing the measure, said—"I feel convinced that if you familiarise the minds of the people of this country with the idea of yielding to the mere display of discontent and the mere ostentation of envy, you will cause injury to property otherwise secure, and it is not with corporate property that this principle will end."

After denying the reiterated assertion that the Irish Church as such was unpopular in the sister island, and contending that if the argument derived from counting noses were pressed in every case, it would justify what even Mr. Gladstone repudiated—the disestablishment of the Church in England and Wales, Lord Salisbury next grappled with the allegations that disestablishment would conciliate the discontent in Ireland. He said—

“Your proposal seems to be to still the waters of this agitating time as the Greeks were wont to do, by offering up a victim to the avenging deities. But are you quite sure that the avenging deities are prepared to accept your offering? I have heard many elaborate attempts to prove that Fenianism is the true necessity that has caused this movement. But is it not an extraordinary phenomenon that for the first time in the history of rebellion we have rebels who do not know the real motive which is the cause of their rebellion? This is the age of rebellions—we have seen them in all countries—but I have never before heard of one where they were at a loss to state the grievances they desired to see removed. You believe that, though the Fenians never raised a cry against the Established Church, it is the Established Church which is really at the bottom of this agitation. It is impossible to conceal from ourselves that something very different is at the bottom of the Fenian movement; and I suspect when the Irish people hear that many Liberal land-

lords have joined in this attack on the Irish Church they will say the reason is that they think they will save themselves by making the parson their Jonah and throwing him overboard. My Lords, it is against the land, and not against the Church, that the Fenian agitation is really directed. You offer them what they do not ask for; you offer them that which will not pacify them. Talk of the monuments of conquest; the landlord is a much more complete monument of conquest than the clergyman. The clergyman does not hurt the peasant; if the clergyman be taken away, the peasant would be no richer, but rather poorer; but the landlord holds the property which the peasant in his traditions still remembers once to have belonged to his sept. If you seek to appease the danger by mere concession; if you yield to the mere demands of anger; or, to use the euphemistic language we have heard, if Fenian outrages are to make you reason calmly and dispassionately, it is to the landlord, and not to the clergyman, that you should really turn your attention."

The speech concluded with the following vigorous and eloquent sentences:—

"We have heard from the opposite bench several very animated appeals to this House, and several constitutional lectures as to our duties. The noble Earl (Lord Clarendon) went so far, as I understand him, as to tell us that we must watch public opinion more closely, and pay greater attention to the majorities of

the other House of Parliament. My Lords, it occurs to me to ask the noble Earl whether he has considered for what purpose this House exists, and whether he would be willing to go through the humiliation of being a mere echo and supple tool of the other House in order to secure for himself the luxury of mock legislation? I agree with my noble friend the noble Earl below me (Lord Derby), that it would be better not to be than to submit to such slavery. I have heard many prophecies as to the conduct of this House. I am not blind to the difficulties of its position in this peculiar age; I am not blind to the peculiar obligations which lie on the members of this House in consequence of the fixed and unalterable constitution of this House. I quite admit—every one must admit—that when the opinion of your countrymen has declared itself, and you see that their convictions—their firm, deliberate, sustained convictions—are in favour of any course, I do not for a moment deny that it is your duty to yield. It may not be a pleasant process; it may even make some of you wish that some other arrangement were existing; but it is quite clear that whereas a member of a Government when asked to do that which is contrary to his convictions may resign, and a member of the Commons when asked to support any measure contrary to his convictions may abandon his seat, no such course as this is open to your Lordships; and therefore on those rare and great occasions on which the national mind has fully declared itself,

I do not doubt your Lordships would yield to the opinion of the country; otherwise the machinery of Government could not be carried on. But there is an enormous step between that and being the mere echo of the House of Commons." . . .

"I am quite sure, whatever judgment may be passed upon us, whatever predictions may be made, be our term of existence long or short, you will never consent to act except as a free, independent House of the Legislature, and that you will consider any other more timid or subservient course as at once unworthy of your traditions, unworthy of your honour, and most of all, unworthy of the nation you serve. I admit that the future is full of difficulty, and that on many questions of doubt and perplexity which may be submitted to the House your prudence and judgment may be sorely taxed; but I am quite clear that with respect to this Bill, so vague, unmeaning, manipulated, and leaving behind it projects of change so vast, so crude, so sweeping, your Lordships can have but one duty, and that is to reject it."

This speech decided the fate of Mr. Gladstone's Bill, which was rejected by a large majority, and Lord Derby having decided to appeal to the people, Parliament was dissolved on the 11th of November. The elections, which took place mainly on the Irish Church question, went in favour of Mr. Gladstone, who, when installed in office, at once proceeded to give effect to the wish of the majority. The Queen, after the Irish

Church Disestablishment Bill had been passed in the Commons, intervened to secure such a compromise as would prevent a conflict between the two Houses of the Legislature, and with the assistance of Lord Salisbury she succeeded.

In the March of 1859 Lord Salisbury introduced a Bill which proposed to facilitate legislation by dispensing with the preliminary stages on the second introduction of Bills that had been dropped at the end of a session.

On the 9th of April he defended Lord Russell's Bill which intended the reform of the House of Lords by the creation of life peerages. He said—

“We must try to impress on the country the fact that because we are not an elective House we are not a bit the less a representative House; and not until the constitution of the House plainly reveals the fact shall we be able to maintain permanently, in face of the advances of the House of Commons, the ancient privileges and constitution of this House. I feel that the question is an important one, and I am the more anxious to say a few words upon it because I differ in opinion from those with whom I ordinarily concur. The future of the House of Lords is one of great hope as regards its stability, and the wisdom of your Lordships at this particular crisis of time in dealing with its constitution will decide how far the power of this House shall remain intact, or how far it shall sink before the advancing power of the House of Commons.”

Mr. Bright, for some reason or other, conceived a dislike for the Bill, and such hostility was threatened to it that it was reluctantly abandoned.

On the 12th of November 1869 Lord Salisbury was elected Chancellor of the University of Oxford, an honour due to his scholastic attainments as well as his political services. But, while cultivating the arts, the main business that he kept steadily in view was the indictment of the Liberal Ministry, then at the zenith of its power.

In 1870 Mr. Gladstone was compelled to introduce a Coercion Bill for Ireland, which drew from Lord Salisbury a severe criticism. He said of the Liberal party—

“It has been their idea for almost a generation that conciliatory and remedial measures only were necessary for the solution of the Irish problem. I trust that they are awakening from that dream. They now learn that after a hundred years of this treatment Ireland is less loyal and less orderly than she was when George III. ascended the throne. The present emergency will compel them to recognise the fact which lies at the bottom of the Irish difficulty, that in that country you are dealing with a population of a lower civilisation in many points than your own; that the liberty—that representative government—that the almost unbounded license of speech and action which is healthy aliment to our own people, is a dangerous stimulant to the social condition of the Irish nation. In this

country you are content—you have long been content—only to guide; in Ireland it is essential that you should govern. Until you have learnt that—until you have established it deeply in the mind of the Irish people—you will not get them to listen to your views and arguments, nor will you gain the full result of these remedial measures, which, as far as they are just, I heartily approve of. I cannot conclude better than by using the words of one who has passed from us, and who has been touchingly alluded to in the course of this debate. You must, in the words of Lord Stanley forty years ago, when he was a member of the House of Commons and a member of a Liberal Ministry—you must ‘teach the Irish people to fear the law before you can induce them to like it.’ I fear that the Government is doing the opposite thing. I fear that you have been too sanguine in the pursuit of remedial and conciliatory measures, sacrificing principles, loyal friends, and all the conditions of the Constitution in this endeavour to conciliate; and until this moment they have trod with very lagging and hesitating steps in the necessary path of executive vigour. I am bound, however, to acknowledge that this Bill is a great step in advance, and I heartily thank the Government for it.”

Upon the Land Act for Ireland Lord Salisbury of course commented strongly, although conscious of his inability to do more than retard the changes he deplored. He said—

“When I am told that a thing is contrary to the

doctrines of political economy, I confess that I never exactly know what the expression means. Political economy is an oracle whose utterances we profoundly respect, but which, like a certain oracle of old, is apt to suit its utterances to the wishes of those who have the guardianship of it for the time being. On a certain occasion, when the Delphic Oracle was in the power of the Macedonian army, its utterances were said to be Philippised; and I am afraid that the utterances of political economy nowadays are only too apt to be 'Gladstonised.' When I first entered Parliament, it used to be regarded as an axiom that could not be controverted, that commercial treaties were founded on erroneous and unsound principles, and could not be for the benefit of the countries entering into them. Circumstances, however, have changed; political economy has reviewed its doctrines, and commercial treaties are regarded as the most orthodox things imaginable. Again, some time ago it was a fundamental doctrine of political economy that Government should not enter into manufacturing operations; whereas it is now actually proposed that our Government shall manufacture coin for foreign states, and I perceive political economy has altered its language accordingly. And so it is with regard to liberty of contract. Formerly it was supposed that political economy required that the power of contract should be unrestricted; whereas now nothing can be more admirable and just than that people should be deprived of that power. Amid all

the vagueness and uncertainty that prevails on the subject, there is at least one proposition on which we feel absolutely certain, and that is that political economy is the property of the Liberal party, and that therefore its doctrines must take whatever form may best suit their views for the time being."

An attempt at practical legislation that he made at the same period requires a brief notice here. Lord Salisbury interested himself on behalf of barristers and doctors, and he also safely piloted Sir John Lubbock's Bank Holiday Bill through the Lords.

Mr. Gladstone, angered at the rejection of his Army Organisation Bill by the Lords, proceeded by royal warrant to abolish the purchase of army commissions. The Lords, sustained by the almost unanimous opinion of the country, censured this act of despotic authority. Upon the vote of censure proposed on the Prime Minister, for what many among his own followers and friends regarded as a dangerous breach of the Constitution, Lord Salisbury said—

"You are called upon to vote upon a great constitutional wrong. You are called upon to defend the independence of Parliament against the misuse by an imperious Minister of the prerogative of the Crown. You are called upon to stamp with disapprobation an act which has no precedent in English history—an act which, if you did not mark it as it deserves, would stand for ever in derogation and depreciation of the authority of the House to which you belong. I know

that the popular defence out of doors for the act of the Ministry is that any act, however unprecedented and unconstitutional, is venial if done in furtherance and support of the opinion of the House of Commons. But such views are little in accordance with the preservation of the balance of the Constitution which we hold, and I am sure that on reflection they will be little approved by the people of this country. Do not let it be said that this vote of censure is an unpractical proceeding because it will not be followed by the resignation of the Ministers. This is a record of a solemn opinion which you place before your countrymen for their approval. It is an invitation to them to consider this great constitutional question. It is an invitation to them, who are in the last resort the supreme authority, to determine whether it is or is not right that every branch of the Constitution should observe with self-restraint and with courtesy the limits of each other's powers. Those who are not favourable to our existing institutions, those who are in love with the sweet simplicity of a National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage and changing its Constitution once every twenty years—such persons, I have no doubt, will give their warm approval to an act which has set two branches of the Legislature in conflict at the bidding and under the patronage of the third. But I am sure that the act of the Government will not be approved by those who value the special stability which, among all the nations of Europe, is the privilege of the insti-

tutions under which we dwell ; and I am sure they will join with you in marking with deserved condemnation an act which, above all others, is a menace to the independence of Parliament and an insult to the acknowledged authority of the House of Lords."

Through the remaining portion of the long period during which Mr. Gladstone ruled England, Lord Salisbury faithfully discharged the duty devolving upon all politicians who find themselves out of office. He voted with the majority who opposed the Ballot Bill, he took a leading part in the combat that arose over the University Tests Bill, and he urged an inquiry as to the many treaty engagements which had made England responsible for the safe continuance of no less than six proud, if petty, states. He also clearly pointed out the indefensible chicanery by which the law was evaded in the Collier and Elwe scandals ; and he opposed the granting of responsible government to the Cape Colony, because he foresaw that it would be employed by the Dutch to oppress their English fellow-colonists ; a series of assaults which in due time bore fruit in Gladstone's defeat.

During 1871 and 1872, in association with Earl Cairns, Lord Salisbury was engaged in arranging the tangled affairs of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company. A capital sum of eighteen million pounds sterling was involved in the interests in question, and when the arbitrators commenced their arduous task, they learned that no less than forty-six Chancery

suits and seventy-eight actions at common law hung over the Company. Seventy-nine special and intricate cases had been stated for the consideration of the arbitrators—an amount of work sufficiently appalling to satisfy the most ardent lover of toil. This huge conglomerate of disorder occupied eighteen months, but at the end of that period it had been reduced to order.

On the 17th of October 1872, Lord Salisbury, speaking at a banquet at Hereford, summed up his case against the Liberal Government as follows:—

“This particular Ministry, with many claims on account of ability—I do not say sincerity—and respect, has this peculiarity, that it has been, in contrast, I may say, to all English Ministries for many generations past, a Ministry of heroic measures—though far be it from me to accuse them of heroism. They keep their heroism entirely to the Home Office, and do not let it transgress the threshold of the Foreign Office. Their advocates themselves rather look upon them as remarkable instances of Christian meekness and humility; but I am afraid that it is that kind of Christian meekness which turns the left cheek to Russia and America, and demands the utmost farthing from the Ashantee.

“But at home the Government have shown a heroism approaching to sternness towards every interest that happened to be in a minority. And what has been the result of their measures?

“Why, they have abolished an Established Church

with circumstances of great hardship, throwing congregations, who had had all the offices of religion fixed them for many generations, upon their own resources, and they have done that in order to acquire the goodwill of a priesthood noted throughout the world for its arrogance. And they have passed an heroic measure adjusting the position of landlord and tenant in Ireland. . . . It was done in order to conciliate a peasantry who had been noted for their turbulence and disaffection to England. How is this measure associated with the arrogance of the priesthood and the turbulence of the peasantry? It is a matter of notoriety that both are more violent and exacting and more insatiable than at any other period of their history. The priesthood have made demands that the education of the country be absolutely placed in their hands, and the peasantry will not be satisfied unless the bond between England and Ireland is broken.

“That was not a great success, but we were comforted with promises. We were told that if we would only wait all these things would be reversed. Well, those who lived on promises would never want for cash. At any rate, we were asked to wait; we sought to see that matters were progressing in the direction of improvement. As for the Liberal legislation of which so much was said, some of the measures were wise, some unwise, some wise in principle but unwisely applied. Certainly I cannot admit their claim to the prosperity which the country is enjoying. It is rather to be attributed

to the invention of railways and to scientific discoveries, which have enabled people to turn over their capital five times where they could formerly have turned it over once. But the last forty years have brought us to such an evil habit of believing that organic change is a necessary function of Parliament, that if the year has gone by and nobody is despoiled and no institution is smashed, we say the session has been wasted, that it has been a barren session. Unless I misread the signs of the times, the feeling of the country is that this heroic legislation must now cease.

“We are asked what would be the policy of the Conservatives if they came into office? We are asked if we would repeal the measures that have been passed. My lords and gentlemen, the processes of destruction are in their nature irrevocable. You can no more set on foot an institution which has been cast down than you can raise the dead. The continuity of existence is broken, and the traditions that cling around it are dissipated. Its power for good is gone. If you were to set it up, it would not be setting up the old thing that existed, but a new thing that you have invented in its place. It may be in the power of future Parliaments in some degree to repair the evil, but they can never recall the past. This, at least, they can do. They can put a stop to the further progress of this principle of assaulting interests for the purpose of showing the industry of Parliament. . . . I don’t dispute the necessity of reforms of the past; but at least

let the time that is past suffice for these violent changes. Surely the body politic is not so corrupt that any more of this violent surgery is necessary! It may be necessary at times to cut out gangrenes, as we are told, and amputate mortified limbs, but that is a process that cannot go on for ever. The body politic cannot any more than the body natural live on a régime of perpetual amputation. . . . Let Parliament proceed with its ordinary work without leaving at every step it takes a bitter resentment to dog its footsteps."

The incriminated Ministry thus arraigned was rapidly losing influence, but without being conscious of its own unpopularity. At length the Cabinet, to the astonishment of no one, saw themselves defeated over a Bill that they had obstinately resolved to pass. This was the Irish University Bill, a measure that pleased nobody except perhaps its author and creator. Mr. Gladstone at once resigned office, but Mr. Disraeli refused to accept power, and for ten weary months the discredited Ministry existed on sufferance. In January 1874 Mr. Gladstone appealed to the country, and with the, to him, surprising result, that the Conservatives secured a majority.

Mr. Disraeli immediately formed a Ministry without difficulty, in which Lord Salisbury took charge of the India Office for the second time.

CHAPTER V.

FROM GREAT DIFFICULTIES TO GREATER TROUBLE.

“There is a necessity in Fate
Why still the brave bold man is fortunate ;
He keeps his object ever full in sight,
And that assurance holds him firm and right ;
True, 'tis a narrow way that leads to bliss,
But right before there is no precipice ;
Fear makes men look aside, and so their footing miss.”
—DRYDEN.

“What is far better and more important than all is this, that I believe Macaulay to be incorruptible. You might lay ribbons, stars, garters, wealth, titles before him in vain. He has an honest, genuine love of his country, and she could not bribe him to neglect her interests.”—SIDNEY SMITH.

1874-1877.

TROUBLES AT HOME AND ABROAD—FAMINE IN INDIA—RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE—“A MASTER OF FLOUTS AND JIBES AND JEERS”—TILT WITH DISRAELI—REFORMING THE UNIVERSITY—ADDRESS TO STUDENTS—CONSTANTINOPLE CONFERENCE—DEFENDING HIS DIPLOMACY—MAPS ON TOO SMALL A SCALE—THE KEYS.

THE Conservative Government came into office with many advantages and but few difficulties. Mr. Glad-

stone's followers were at enmity among themselves and intensely unpopular both at home and abroad. With the exception of a few faithfuls, who adhered to the Liberal flag always and at any peril, there was a universal desire for a change in the home and foreign policy of England.

As yet the Nonconformists had not discovered that Mr. Gladstone (one of the most advanced Puseyites) was their heaven-sent champion, nor had that statesman deigned to court them with ambiguous phrases, to be forgotten or explained away when the need to do so should arise. The Church, and almost every commercial interest, desired to be left for a time in peace, while the nation loudly demanded a change in the foreign administration, which had degraded England almost to the depth of contempt into which Portugal and Spain had sunk.

In spite of the universal sense of relief with which the Liberal party disappeared, there were indications which must have made the Conservative leaders anxious and careful. Lord Salisbury, for example, was confronted by a serious difficulty, which seemed perilous either to touch or to leave alone.

In the far past India had accepted famine as the sovereign act of God, to be endured, but not to be mitigated, much less prevented. With the advent of English rule there had set in a greater sense of the obligations due to the races, that are human although they are ignorant and dusky. A great famine was

expected by the rulers of India, but a serious difference of opinion prevailed as to the best means required to avert or to ameliorate it.

The Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, decided that the ordinary channels of trade would prove equal to the need, especially if the Government imported rice into the threatened districts of Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal strongly held and asserted a contrary opinion; in his judgment the exportation of grain from India should be stopped at once, and rice should be distributed gratis.

Lord Salisbury supported the Viceroy, whose policy, although likely to be unpopular for a time, was in accordance with sound principles of finance and economy. A fleeting popularity at home and in India might attend and reward the policy of the Lieutenant-Governor, but in the end private trade would suffer, and in consequence the evil would be intensified as well as spread over a wider area.

Lord Salisbury was staunch in his support of Lord Northbrook, and with the gratifying result that the famine did not increase the death-rate in the slightest degree.

The new Ministry were hardly so successful at home, for, to their sorrow, they found themselves unwarily entangled in a serious dispute. The Romeward movement at Oxford had been watched with intense interest by Lord Shaftesbury, who had attempted to check it by legislation. He failed, and, to soothe him, Arch-

bishop Tait prepared a measure, which was modified and changed in accordance with the wishes of such Bishops as sympathised with the incriminated party.

In the Lords the Episcopal Bill met with a strenuous opposition from Lord Salisbury, whose political foresight warned him of the futile character of the proposed legislation. He said—and the passage is interesting, not only as a statement of his views upon Church government, but as an example of his political sagacity—

“There are three schools in the Church, which I might designate by other names, but which I prefer to call the Sacramental, the Emotional, and the Philosophical. They are schools which more or less, except when they have been crushed by the strong hand of power, have been found in the Church in every age. They arise not from any difference in the Church itself, but because the truth must necessarily assume different tints as it is reported through the different media of different minds. But it is upon the frank and loyal tolerance of these schools that the existence of your Establishment depends.

“The problem you have to solve is how to repress personal and individual eccentricities, if you will, and to repress all exhibitions of wilfulness, of carelessness, of caprice; but at the same time that you do that, you must carefully guard any measures which you introduce from injuring the consciences or suppressing the rights of either of the three schools of which the

Church consists. . . . If you attempt to drive from the Church of England any one of the parties of which it is composed—if you tamper with the spirit of toleration of which she is the embodiment—you will produce a convulsion in the Church and imperil the interests of the State itself.”

He succeeded in modifying the measure, not at all to the pleasure of Lord Shaftesbury.

“By degrees,” wrote Lord Shaftesbury, when the Bill came back to the Commons, “the favour of the Government came out, overruling manifestly two of their colleagues, Cardinal Hardy and Monsignor Salisbury. Gladstone, in a florid and fallacious speech, had prepared the way for Dizzy’s strategy. He concluded his Ultramontane address by six resolutions so Romish, revolutionary, and yet feeble, that Dizzy, who was seeking a ground on which to grant a day for the Committee, saw his opportunity and seized it.”

Mr. Disraeli adopted the Bill, which he described as one to put down Ritualism. The House of Commons, deceived by his specious words, introduced a clause which, should the local Bishop refuse to interfere, permitted an appeal to the Archbishop.

This essential change in the text of the Bill Lord Salisbury counselled the Lords to resist; and, said he, “Much has been said of the majority in another place, and of the peril in which the Bill will be if the clause under discussion is rejected. There is a great deal of that kind of bluster when any particular

course has been taken by the other House of Parliament."

The Commons reluctantly acquiesced in the change. Lord Shaftesbury said of the adoption of the Bill, "It would have been comparatively easy, had not Salisbury by his violent language exasperated the Commons."

Mr. Disraeli himself resented the criticisms of his colleague, and referred to him as follows:—

"My noble friend was long a member of this House, and is well known to many of the members even of this Parliament. He is not a man who measures his phrases. He is one who is a great master of jibes and flouts and jeers; but I do not suppose there is any one who is prejudiced against a member of Parliament on account of such qualifications. My noble friend knows the House of Commons well, and he is not, perhaps, superior to the consideration that by making a speech of that kind, and taunting respectable men like ourselves with being a 'blustering majority,' he probably might stimulate the *amour-propre* of some individuals to take the course which he wants, and to defeat the Bill."

Lord Salisbury replied to this intemperate sally by stating in his place in the Lords—

"It never entered into my head to use a term in the least degree disrespectful to the other House of Parliament. I regret that the statement should have been made, because I should exceedingly dislike to have it attached to my name, and by such distinguished autho-

rities, or to have it thought that I could be guilty of such an offence at all."

This passage-at-arms was interpreted by some as an indication of personal hostility which would prevent cordial co-operation between the two statesmen. But Lord Salisbury was too powerful to be ignored, and at the Lord Mayor's banquet, on the 9th of November, Mr. Disraeli took the opportunity to pay him a well-deserved compliment.

The Ministry required unity, for their policy was about to be subjected to a most intense strain.

The year 1876 proved on the whole a trying time for the British Government both at home and abroad. But before relating the incidents that led up to the Berlin Conference, it should be mentioned that during the year named Lord Salisbury introduced a bill which proposed that certain Commissioners, together with members of the University of Oxford, should be empowered to draw up statutes, to rearrange the finances, to remodel the teaching arrangements of the University, and to compel the idle Fellows to work. He said, "It seems that if all these idle fellowships were to be done away with, and no one was to hold a fellowship without doing educational work, we should have a sum of £50,000 to £60,000 or £80,000 a year. That under an improved system could be applied to University purposes."

This useful reform was unhappily not carried into effect until 1877, when a similar Bill was introduced

for the rearrangement and reform of Cambridge University.

Lord Salisbury, unlike his great rival, has seldom appeared as a public teacher, and that, probably, because he has devoted himself so entirely to the special duties that in these days devolve upon a British Minister.

In the year 1876, however, he addressed the students at Cooper's Hill upon their duty towards the natives of India whom they hoped one day to rule. He insisted that their duty would not be discharged by a formal performance of regulated and prescribed tasks. "Your duty," he said, "extends beyond that which merely comes to you in official hours. Perhaps as large a part of your duty will be accomplished in your social relations. With the great command of public opinion which is necessarily given to the members of the service, their thoughts and their sentiments are a matter of grave moment, and will seriously affect both the feelings of ourselves and the future course of the government of the country."

He explained to them the fact that the founders of the College had in view mainly "to send forth to bear rule in India Englishmen worthy of the name they bear;" and he expressed a wish that the students should remember, in undertaking their life-work, "that it imposes upon you, as no other career or profession does, the highest responsibility for the mode in which your opportunities are fulfilled."

These are noble words, and deserve to be weighed

and acted upon by those who hope to take a prominent share in the regulation of our extending Empire. Around the words "duty" and "responsibility" all other Christian hopes and fears crystallise ; if they are absent, all that gives meaning, form, beauty, and utility to life and character are absent too.

The oppression which seems inseparable from Turkish, and indeed all Mohammedan, rule, had long been a subject of anxious consideration with those who, like Lord Salisbury, desired to both elevate and liberate the oppressed races held down by the Turks without provoking a European scramble. The Ottoman was as stubborn as he was ignorant ; he would neither amend his ways nor permit his friends to improve the territories subject to his blighting dominion.

The three Imperial Chancellors sent a remonstrance to Turkey, from which England, as she had not been consulted in its preparation, withheld her assent.

The same abstention prevented the Berlin Memorandum from exerting its due effect upon Turkey, who supposed that England was either indifferent, too deeply in love with the Crescent, or too much afraid of Russia, to interfere with such trivial matters as the lives and liberties of Servian or Bulgarian peasants. Nor did she awake from her dream when Servia and Montenegro took up arms to secure the liberty that Turkey would not grant when they asked for it.

About the Turkish atrocities Lord Salisbury said that "those in office and those out of office stood in

somewhat different positions. Those who are in office have their feelings like other men, but they hold the resources and the power of England, not as owners, but as trustees. An owner may do what he likes, looking to his sympathies, his anxieties, and his wishes ; but a trustee must act according to the strict rights and interests committed to his charge."

The Turks have always been a brave race, and they showed that they were not worse soldiers than their forefathers. It soon appeared probable that the insurgents would be trampled down to a hopeless slavery, but Russia, whose philanthropy few people trusted, was eagerly watching the roasting chestnuts. To prevent her designs a conference of the Great Powers was summoned to meet at Constantinople. At this Congress Lord Salisbury was present as English Commissioner. On the 20th of November he left London, accompanied by the Marchioness of Salisbury and his son and daughter. Disraeli purposed to intervene on behalf of Turkey should Russia declare war, and it was deemed wise to learn what help in battle England might expect from the Continent. Lord Salisbury successively visited Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Rome, and found in every instance that the Cabinets were intensely hostile to war. Armed with this information, he reached Constantinople on the 5th of December, and on the 23rd the Conference began.

After some discussion, the British proposals were agreed to as furnishing a suitable basis for discussion.

They were certainly moderate, and such as only the most infatuated would have rejected.

England asked, first, for the restoration of peace and the *status quo* in Servia and Montenegro ; secondly, that Turkey should cede local self-government to Bosnia and Herzegovina ; and thirdly, for guarantees for the better government of Bulgaria.

To the chagrin of all who dreaded the outbreak of war, on the 20th of January Turkey rejected these moderate and just demands. The Conference therefore separated, and Lord Salisbury returned to England.

On the 8th of February 1877 the Duke of Argyle in the House of Lords called attention to the Conference. In reply to his criticisms Lord Salisbury said—

“It is very easy to talk of threatening coercion against the Turkish Government, but have you picked the idea to pieces in your own mind? What do you mean by coercion? I know that it means that your fleet may sail up the Bosphorus and threaten Stamboul. But suppose Turkey refuses ; you can do nothing more. I don't suppose that military coercion—considering the extent of the Turkish Empire—would be a course which military strategists would recommend ; a naval coercion would naturally be adopted. But suppose Turkey refuses, and you proceed to the *ultima ratio* ; you might indeed dethrone the Ottoman dynasty—that would be the signal for confusion and anarchy in every part of the empire. You announce to all the Mohammedan population that the dynasty

to which they have for hundreds of years been attached, and to which they are attached still, has been struck down by a Christian power in the cause of Christians. You make this declaration to a mixed population of Mohammedans and Christians; and the Mohammedan population being armed and the Christian population being still unarmed, what would result but a most frightful exaggeration of those horrible scenes which we have heard so much of as occurring in Bulgaria?"

On the 20th of February Lord Salisbury again explained the views and purposes of the Conference, which, he said, were—

"First of all, to restore peace between Turkey and Servia and Montenegro, and then to obtain good government for the Turkish provinces; but undoubtedly we also went into the Conference to stop a great and menacing danger, namely, the prospect of war between Russia and Turkey. . . . It seems to me," he continued, "as it must be to England also, that the refusal of the Turks is a mystery, for the infatuation of that course seems to be so tremendous. I observe that under it their conduct has been very general, for all kinds of excellent and extraordinary reasons have been suggested to explain it. To myself it certainly appears that one of the causes which led the Turks to this unfortunate resolution was the belief which has been so sedulously fostered—I know not by whom, but by irresponsible advisers—that the power of Russia was rotten, that the armies of Russia were suffering from

disease, that the mobilisation of the army had failed, and that consequently the fear of war was idle. They counted upon every possible contingency. Their traditional policy had been to maintain themselves by the division of the Powers, and they imagined that the Powers would be still divided, and that a general European war would save them."

On the 31st of March England signed a protocol, but the infatuation of the Turk was too profound to be disturbed, and on the 24th of April Russia declared war. The history of the struggle is well known. While it continued, in October 1877, Lord Salisbury visited Bradford, and, in reply to an address presented to him by the local Chamber of Commerce, alluded to some remarks of Mr. Bright, who had urged irrigation as a remedy for famine in India. Lord Salisbury said—

"I am the last person to speak against a judicious, circumspect, and liberal expenditure on public works; but there is a great difference between that and rushing hastily into an expenditure of thirty millions—a sum which I am sorry to say fell from the mouth of one of the most distinguished authorities in the country, Mr. Bright. Irrigation is a very good thing indeed, but it won't prevent famine, for water will not flow uphill."

In the evening of the same day Lord Salisbury addressed a vast throng in St. George's Hall. In reply to the allegation that England ought to have acted along with her allies, and thus have enforced the decision of the Conference on Turkey, he said—

“This was good advice, but it was subject to the qualification with which a certain recipe in an old cookery-book commences, because before you act with your allies you must first catch your allies. All Europe, except Russia, was of one mind—that however much we might desire reforms in the Ottoman Empire, it did not so deeply concern us as to justify us in spending the money of our people and shedding the blood of our soldiers.

“I observe that when Lord Granville was here he said it filled him with surprise that a Government which he was pleased to say was able, and to some extent competent, should have so little ambition to connect their names with any great act of legislation. Now that reproach of Lord Granville seemed to me to throw a flood of light upon the conduct of the past Administration. I never could understand why they went about disturbing everything and offending everybody, setting class against class, making as many walls for their own heads to run against as they could, and doing all they could to divide a previously harmonious community. But now I understand it all. If it were necessary that each member of the Ministry should connect his name with some great act of legislation, it is obvious that that could not be done without very materially disturbing the unfortunate persons who were to be the subjects of that act of legislation.”

The position of the Ministry was difficult, for, in addition to the Jingoës, there was a large and deter-

mined section of British society who earnestly desired England to intervene in the interests of Turkey; a few perhaps because they loved war, but more because they really believed India to be in danger.

Lord de Mauley in the House gave voice to the fears of the latter class, and drew from Lord Salisbury one of those indiscreet speeches which strangely contradict his usually sound judgment. The complaint of Russia's advance across Asia alarmed men because, said Lord Salisbury, of the "popular use of maps upon too small a scale. As with such maps you are able to put a thumb on India and a finger on Russia, some persons at once think that the political situation is alarming, and that India must be looked to. If the noble Lord would only use a larger map—say one on the scale of the Ordnance map of England—he would find that the distance between Russia and British India is not to be measured by the finger and thumb, but by a rule. There are between them deserts and mountainous chains measured by thousands of miles, and these are serious obstacles to any advance of Russia, however well planned such an advance might be."

This sally was almost as imprudent as a speech made the same evening at a banquet given by the Merchant Taylors' Company. "I have," said Lord Salisbury, "a colonial friend who is very much exercised in his mind and in a very anxious state in connection with the Cape of Good Hope. He pointed out to me that Russia was in Armenia, that Armenia is the key to

Syria, that Syria is the key to Egypt, and that any one advancing into Egypt has the key to Africa. By this list of keys, long drawn out, he shows that the present victories of Russia seriously menace South Africa. I have done my best to console him, but I feel that his anxious feelings are only characteristic of the apprehensions that I have avowed to you."

Very clever and smart beyond a question, but confessedly indiscreet language on the part of a responsible Minister of the Crown. It is also wise to remember the fact that Lord Salisbury's subsequent foreign policy is an indictment of the language we have quoted. Evidently Disraeli's long-remembered flout is in some sense true, and a strand of imprudence is blended with the solid sense of Lord Salisbury's mind.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM ONE SIDE OF THE HOUSE TO THE OTHER.

“Man is dear to man ; the poorest poor
Long for some moments in a weary life
When they can know and feel that they have been
Themselves the fathers and the dealers out
Of some small blessings, have been kind to such
As needed kindness, for the single cause
That we have all of us one human heart.”

—WORDSWORTH.

“It does not seem right that I should keep to myself what may cheer a fellow-pilgrim on his way.”—GENERAL GORDON.

1878-1880.

RESIGNATIONS AND DISSENSIONS IN THE CABINET—ANGLO-TURKISH CONVENTION—LORD SALISBURY’S INDICTMENT OF RUSSIA—THE SECRET AGREEMENT—FALSEHOOD—A PLOT UNDER A PLOT—“PEACE WITH HONOUR”—CALLING A PEER TITUS OATES—PICKING A QUARREL TO KEEP THE PEACE—THE ZULU WAR—THE ELEMENTS FIGHTING AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT—DEFEAT.

THE utter collapse of Turkey, although it was highly salutary to herself and necessary for the well-being of her subject provinces, created a new European danger in Russia’s ambition. After Plevna fell, Lord Derby mildly desired the Czar not to occupy Constantinople,

and that potentate amiably promised compliance with the request unless "military necessity"—a convenient phrase—should render such a course needful.

But the Russians crossed the Balkans; soon the whole Balkan Peninsula lay at their mercy, and nothing remained to hinder their march to Adrianople.

Mr. Layard telegraphed home a report, which he did not attempt to verify, to the effect that the Russians were marching on Gallipoli. The English fleet was ordered at once to the Dardanelles. Lord Carnarvon hereupon placed his resignation in the hands of his chief, but he withdrew it when, the report being contradicted, the orders to the fleet were countermanded. But on the 23rd of January it was again decided to send the fleet to Constantinople, and to ask Parliament for a vote of six millions. Lord Carnarvon once more resigned, and this time he really retired, but Lord Derby, who had also resigned, consented to remain in the Cabinet. The fleet was stopped at the entrance to the Straits, and directed to wait in Besika Bay. These manœuvres, which would be amusing but for their significance, were varied on the 13th July by the fleet sailing up to the Golden Horn. Without a doubt Russia was, after her customary manner, attempting to obtain her purpose by bluff and bluster; while, on the other hand, Disraeli would have cheerfully gone to war if he dared, and had deemed it politically wise to do so. On the 3rd of March the treaty of San Stefano was arranged between Russia and Turkey, and

on the 22nd published to Europe. Russia, in doing so, declared her intention of accepting or rejecting any discussion of the details that might be raised at a Congress of the Powers according to her own sovereign pleasure. In other words, she declared her intention of dealing with Turkey as she deemed wise without consulting any of the Powers or recognising their claim to revise the treaty. The English Government on the 27th of March resolved to call out the reserves and to seize and fortify Cyprus, as a preliminary step to war, if Russia would not abandon her arrogant and deceitful attitude. This resolution, which was approved by the majority of the nation, led to Lord Derby's resignation.

On the 1st of April, Lord Salisbury's appointment as Foreign Secretary was announced in Parliament. On the 2nd of April the newspapers made public one of the most remarkable State papers of the age. Its principal characteristic is strength, its vigorous language fitly expressing the opinions of a strong nation. To the various Powers it explained the English position, and it was understood by Russia as a threat not to be disregarded. It began by demurring to Russia's objection to accept a full discussion of the treaty in a European Conference ; and said that the English dislike to the treaty would remain even if a considerable portion of the stipulations were such as could be approved of. But so far from this being the case, "an inspection of the treaty will sufficiently show that Her

Majesty's Government could not in an European Congress accept any partial or fragmentary examination of its provisions. Every material stipulation which it contains involves a departure from the treaty of 1856."

For the declaration annexed to the first Protocol of the Conference of 1871, to which Russia had assented, had agreed to acknowledge as a first principle of the law of nations—"that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting Powers, by means of an amicable arrangement."

Without violating the spirit of this declaration, the English Government could not acquiesce in "the withdrawal from the cognisance of the Powers of articles in the new treaty which are modifications of existing treaty engagements, and are inconsistent with them. The general nature of the treaty, and the combined effect of the several stipulations upon the interests of the signatory Powers, furnish another and conclusive reason against the separate discussion of any one portion of those stipulations apart from the rest.

"The most important consequences to which the treaty practically leads are those which result from its action as a whole upon the nations of South-Eastern Europe. By the articles erecting the new Bulgaria a strong Slav state will be created under the auspices and control of Russia, possessing important harbours upon the shores of the Black Sea and the Archipelago, and conferring upon that Power a preponderating influence

over both political and commercial relations in those seas. It will be so constituted as to merge into the dominant Slav majority a considerable mass of population which is Greek in race and sympathy, and which views with alarm the prospect of absorption into a community alien to it, not only in nationality, but in political tendency and in religious allegiance. The provisions by which this new State is to be subjected to a ruler whom Russia will practically choose, its administration framed by a Russian Commissary, and the first working of its institutions commenced under the control of a Russian army, sufficiently indicate the political system of which in future it is to form a part.

“Stipulations are added which will extend this influence even beyond the boundaries of the new Bulgaria. The provision—in itself highly commendable—of improved institutions for the populations of Thessaly and Epirus, is accompanied by a condition that the law by which they are to be secured shall be framed under the supervision of the Russian Government.

“These, accompanied by treaty engagement, ostensibly on behalf of the religious adherents of the Russians, but which give Russia the control not only of the Slav but of the Greek people, to the prejudice of that nation, and by every country having interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. The terms severally of Greek, Albanian, and Slav Powers would render the administration difficult, and, while weak particularly, would risk anarchy.

On other frontiers of the Ottoman Empire analogous results might be anticipated.

“The compulsory alienation of Bessarabia from Roumania, the extension of Bulgaria to the shores of the Black Sea, which are principally inhabited by Mussulmans and Greeks, and the acquisition of the important harbour of Batoum, will make the will of the Russian Government dominant over the vicinity of the Black Sea. The acquisition of the strongholds of Armenia will place the population of that province under the immediate influence of the Power which holds them; while the extensive European trade which now passes from Trebizond to Persia will, in consequence of the cession in Kurdistan, be liable to be arrested at the pleasure of the Russian Government by the prohibitory barriers of their commercial system.”

Objections, it was said, could be urged against these stipulations in detail, but the great objection, no doubt, in addition to the repressive effect upon the Greek people and the maritime influence of England, would be, that the treaty was calculated “to depress almost to the point of entire subjection the political independence of the Government of Constantinople.

And it was pointed out that the provinces under Oriental Roumania were essentially of the deepest interest to Great Britain. “A discussion limited to articles selected by one Power in the Congress would be an illusory remedy for the dangers to English interests and to the permanent peace of Europe which

would result from the state of things which the treaty proposes to establish."

The object of Her Majesty's Government in the Conference was to reform Turkey under the Ottoman Government, removing grievances, and protecting it until it needed no protector. The unfortunate resistance of the Ottoman Government had prevented this policy, and necessitated a large change in the required treatment. "But good government, assured peace, and freedom for populations to whom these blessings have been strange, are still the objects which this country earnestly desires to secure."

"In reopening a full consideration of the general interests which the new arrangements threaten to affect, Her Majesty's Government believe they are taking the surest means of securing these objects. They would willingly have entered a Congress in which the stipulations in question could have been examined as a whole in their relation to existing treaties, to the acknowledged right of Great Britain and of other Powers, and to the beneficent ends which the united action of Europe has always been directed to secure. But neither the interests which Her Majesty's Government are specially bound to guard nor the well-being of the regions with which the treaty deals would be consulted by the assembling of a Congress whose deliberations were to be restricted by such reservations as those which have been laid down by Prince Gortschakoff in his most recent communications."

This circular, which in effect condemned every article of the treaty of San Stefano and demanded a restoration of the *status quo* in Turkey, provoked a sharp retort from Russia. In his answer Prince Gortschakoff replied to the circular in detail, and concluded with the cynical comment, "The Marquis of Salisbury tells us what the English Government does not wish, but says nothing of what it does wish. We think it would be useful if his Lordship would be good enough to make this latter point known, in order to promote an understanding of the situation."

The resolution to call out the reserves was supported by less than half the House, yet immediately after Parliament was adjourned the Indian troops were summoned to Malta. Peace meetings were held in various parts of the country, and when Parliament met an attempt was made to condemn what was regarded both as a violation of law and an attempt to wrest the control of the army from Parliament. The unmistakable uneasiness felt by many members of their own party induced the Government to come to terms with Russia. A secret agreement was therefore concluded between Lord Salisbury and Count Schouvaloff, which cut down Bulgaria to the limits assigned by the Constantinople Conference, and divided the new state into two provinces, only one of which was to be independent of Turkish control. Batoum and Kars were assigned to Russia, who thus became supreme upon the Turkish

seaboard. Russia also took Bessarabia, while Turkey agreed to cede Kolour to Persia.

The *Globe* newspaper published a summary of this secret agreement, to the horror of the Ministry. On the 3rd of June Lord Grey inquired in the House of Lords if "there was any truth in the statement . . . as to the terms agreed upon between this country and Russia." Lord Salisbury replied, "The statement to which the noble Earl refers, and other statements that I have seen, are wholly unauthentic, and are not deserving the confidence of your Lordships' House." Lord Grey, apparently slightly credulous, remarked that he could not credit the statement that Lord Salisbury had consented to the cession of Bessarabia, and characterised the allegation as monstrous. Lord Salisbury made no reply to this second appeal. However unwise the publication of the document may have been, no one can defend conduct which in other circumstances no man of honour would dream of committing. In other walks of life Lord Salisbury's statement would have been stamped with a strong name; it is a pity that he thus stooped to falsehood.

On the 3rd of June Bismarck invited the Powers to attend a Conference at Berlin, and his circular was so drafted, that while it flattered the pride of Russia, it constituted the Prince master of the situation.

The Congress met for the despatch of business on the 14th of June, and on that day the *Globe* published the full text of the secret treaty. The Duke of Rich-

mond in the Lords, on behalf of the Government, denied the accuracy of the document, and Sir Stafford Northcote in the Commons, although one of the most upright of men, also stooped to the same petty deceit. The Government even threatened to prosecute the official who had supplied a copy of the agreement to the *Globe*, but a well-grounded fear of what he might reveal induced them to refrain. Lord Houghton spoke the feeling of many well-wishers of the Government when he said, "It now stands before the world that England did not go into the Congress with free hands, but before going into it she made a contract, and had in the main abandoned some of the most important points which I and other members of the House considered it was the duty of this country to insist upon."

Technically the statements made by Lord Salisbury and his colleagues were correct, for the *Globe* had not suspected the existence of another secret treaty, which was a plot within a plot. On the 4th of June Turkey had signed a Convention with England assigning Cyprus to the latter Power, who in consideration thereof guaranteed the integrity of Turkey's Asian frontier.

This agreement was made known on the 18th of July, and was denounced by Mr. Gladstone as an "insane covenant." The compliance of Turkey had been purchased by the abandonment of the Greek claims, which indeed Disraeli had actively opposed at Berlin, and the Treaty of Berlin was signed on the 13th of July. By it eleven millions of people were freed from Turkish

despotism, and two kingdoms, to which a third has been subsequently added, were erected with great possibilities in the future.

Shortly before the departure of the English plenipotentiaries for Berlin, Lord Granville called the attention of the House of Lords to the fact that two Ministers would be absent at the same time from the Cabinet. The Premier replied, "The noble Earl has expressed his regret that my noble friend sitting on my right and myself should be abroad at the same time ; he has been pleased to add that he considers that the absence of the noble Marquis and of myself from the Cabinet will diminish the personal importance of those that remain. My Lords, I can conceive no circumstance, ahem ! more calculated to add to it."

On the 15th of July Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury returned to London, bringing, as they said, "Peace with honour." The worthlessness of Cyprus, and the magnitude of the responsibilities assumed, were not realised at the time by the Tories, and the Liberals were only too thankful, to have escaped war, to be nice about theatrical phrases.

On the 18th of July the Premier gave an explanation of the treaty, and Lord Derby, who had hitherto kept silence under great provocation, revealed the fact that the Ministry had once decided upon an expedition to Syria, which gasconading project had produced his resignation.

Lord Salisbury not only denied this statement, but

so far forgot himself as to compare Lord Derby to Titus Oates. Lord Derby had spoken from a memorandum made at the time, Lord Salisbury from memory, so that the probabilities are in favour of the accuracy of the statement made by the former. But even if Lord Derby were in error, such language as was applied to him was highly indecorous.

On the 27th of July, at a banquet that was given to the two plenipotentiaries who had represented England at Berlin, Lord Salisbury referred to the fact that the oppressed natives of Cyprus had not objected to English rule, because, said he, "we, at all events, have won our spurs before the world. We have shown in governing India that where English rule and English influence enters, peace and order revive, prosperity and wealth increase; and therefore it is that the prospect of English rule is welcomed by men of every race and every creed. Have we a right to throw away, to hide under a bushel, to conceal in a corner such influence as this, merely lest we should at some distant time, and in some inconceivable circumstances, add to our responsibilities?"

It snowed honours for the two Ministers: the Queen conferred the Garter upon them, and the City of London, not undeceived until the Lord Mayor's banquet, when it proved by corporeal sufferings the nature of Cyprus wine, honoured Lord Salisbury with its freedom. The City Chamberlain then reminded Lord Salisbury—"You, my Lord Salisbury, will not be displeased if I

remind you that you claim descent from no less than three aldermen of this city."

The rewards of the Oriental methods of diplomacy in favour with Lord Beaconsfield perhaps encouraged him to employ them again, but this time with greater peril and greater loss than ever before.

The Afghan people had always been regarded as those who might be trusted as an advance-guard against Russia, provided they were not irritated by the presence of a white resident.

The Beaconsfield intrigues against Russia, and the known fact that Lord Salisbury desired to disregard the warnings of statesmen like Sir John Lawrence, provoked the evil they were intended to guard against. Lord Northbrook refused to work out a policy that he believed would prove disastrous; he was therefore removed, and a suitable tool found in Lord Lytton. The new Viceroy, after attempting to gag the Indian press, sent an envoy to Cabul, and authorised or permitted a mendacious statement to be published, to the effect that the English flag had been fired upon. In accordance with the custom prevalent during Beaconsfield's rule, war against Afghanistan was declared at once, and Parliament was afterwards asked to sanction the deed it could not well censure.

The Ministers were loud in their own defence; "it was not the military invasion of India, but the diplomatic invasion of Afghanistan that we had to guard against," said Lord Salisbury. "We had to take measures to prevent Russia working in the East with Afghanistan

as her base, as she had worked in Europe with Bulgaria and Bosnia. To prevent such an evil, remonstrances to St. Petersburg were useless. It could only be done by English agents on the spot, who might watch the unauthorised diplomacy of Russia."

The Afghan ruler did not object to the presence of a native Mohammedan, but he well knew that the bigotry of his people would not permit the presence of a European in their capital.

It was an easy task to force an army into the land, to beat down Afghan resistance, to split up the state, and to drive the one man who had been able to rule the Afghans into exile. Lord Beaconsfield proclaimed his triumph loudly, and Lord Salisbury defended the aggressive policy; but the jubilations came too soon. The Afghans rose *en masse* and slaughtered the English envoy and all his suite. General Roberts by a brilliant march again seized the kingdom, but he in turn soon required an army to deliver him from the besiegers who swarmed round every British post. During the controversy excited by this policy, Lord Salisbury's scornful references to Lord Lawrence and other heroic public servants cannot but be deplored. Without doubt, these sneers and jibes arose from an ardent sense of the magnitude of the issues at stake; but it is pitiful that Lord Salisbury should have resorted to such mean depreciation of heroic men.

The Ministry thus had sufficient trouble in India to exhaust their energies, but in Africa, their servant, Sir Bartle Frere, against their wish, proclaimed war

against the Zulus, who, unfortunately for him, were brave and strong—indeed, stronger and wiser than the European generals opposed to them; for few such defeats have occurred in English story as that which we suffered from the Zulus.

These unfortunate incidents were, we hope, to be attributed to Lord Beaconsfield rather than to his Foreign Minister. Soon the wear of time showed the superficial tinsel used by Beaconsfield to delude, and men began to lose confidence in the Government. If Gladstone had pursued a foolish policy at home, Beaconsfield also had purchased a little glitter abroad at a terrible price. To add to the misery at home, which the Government ignored, although they proposed to tax the suffering British people in aid of the Turks, a people in much less distress than the Britons, a hard winter set in, and the suffering incident to an inclement season was attributed to the faults of the Government. The meretricious sparkle of phrases lost their charm in the ears of men who were bankrupt, or who were fearing lest they should become so, and, in spite of the eloquent defences made by various members of the Government, it was evident that their lease of power was becoming beautifully short. The Opposition was laudably vigilant, and even Mr. Bright delivered a speech in which he identified the Government with the Spirit of Evil, which, he said, had long struggled for supremacy in England. The English Ambassador at Constantinople attempted to earn a little cheap popularity for the Government by interceding

with the Sultan on behalf of a poor Christian schoolmaster sentenced to death for helping the circulation of the Bible. But this same Ambassador had denied the Bulgarian atrocities, and had been silent while thousands were butchered ; no one, therefore, believed him to be sincere in his plea for mercy ; the Porte least of all. Indeed, the Sultan took the opportunity of openly and grossly insulting England, after the manner of spiteful and pettish natures ; so that the Ambassador injured his Government instead of helping them.

The *Standard*, after playing the rôle of a candid friend, openly and heartily attacked the Government upon a Water Bill intended to take a monopoly from those who had misused it, and the other London papers followed the lead of the Conservative organ. Strangely blind to all these many tokens of unpopularity, too evident to others, Lord Beaconsfield dissolved Parliament, and that, too, after the Budget had announced a deficit of more than three millions. Many causes combined to produce the emphatic condemnation pronounced at the polls ; the Ministry had indeed wasted their season of grace. When the elections were finished, the numbers ran—351 Liberals, 237 Tories, and 65 Home Rulers. Lord Beaconsfield resigned before the meeting of Parliament, realising that it is for the benefit of the people that the best of Ministers should be permitted for a time to taste the sweets of retirement, and from the Opposition benches study those who are in essentials exactly what he was himself when in the sunshine of power.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM LEADER OF A PARTY TO HERO OF THE EMPIRE.

“There are other battles to fight
Than the battles of which men speak ;
There are battles which none can win
But the lowly in heart and meek.
There are battles in which earth’s mightiest fall,
And the strong ones are the weak.”

“The busy man has more leisure than the modest man. . . .
Who are the doubting men? Those who are not doing real work.
The man who goes out with his gospel to the slums and the alleys
of London comes back a confirmed Christian; the man who takes
out his little religious knowledge to the club, the playground, the
festive circle, comes back wondering whether, after all, there is not
something in unbelief. Both issues are natural.”—DR. PARKER.

1880—1886.

MR. PARNELL AND HIS NEW PARTY—LORD SALISBURY FIGHT-
ING THE COMPENSATION BILL—SPEECH AT TAUNTON—SUR-
RENDER OF THE TRANSVAAL—ELECTED LEADER IN THE
HOUSE OF LORDS—MUTINY AMONG HIS FOLLOWERS—LITE-
RARY WORK—BATTLE OF HOUSEHOLD SUFFRAGE—A COM-
PROMISE—GORDON’S DEATH—PREMIER—DEFEAT—THE HOME
RULE BILL—PREMIER AGAIN.

MR. GLADSTONE found, on assuming office, that he had
greatly under-estimated the difficulties under which he
must carry on the government of the Empire. In India
Lord Lytton at once resigned office, his last act being the

publication of such a fallacious statement of accounts, that in commercial circles it would have been termed a fraud. A trifle of nine millions was quietly dropped out of the account in order that the Afghan war might appear less costly and ruinous. In Afghanistan itself the dash and skill of General Roberts alone prevented what would have shaken, perhaps shattered, the English rule in India. But the chief troubles of the new Government arose in connection with Ireland, full of distress, and with Mr. Parnell organising a party destined to play an important part in British politics.

Mr. Parnell proposed, at first in vain, that where the tenant was really too poor to pay his rent he should receive compensation if evicted from the holding he had improved, and the facts adduced in support of his plan proved irresistible, at least to the Ministry. A Bill upon the lines suggested by the Irish leader was introduced by them, ran a dangerous career of opposition in the House of Commons, and passed only by half the huge majority that generally voted as Mr. Gladstone bade them. In the House of Lords the Whigs openly declared their dissent from the measure, which indeed had but few friends among the peers. Lord Salisbury, of course, denounced the Bill, of which he said, "Nothing can be more puzzling than its original genesis. We do not know who suggested it, who produced it, or who approved of it. In its course through Parliament it was never possible to predict from day to day what new form it would assume. Now that we have

it, it is full of expressions which the boldest man does not venture to interpret."

In reference to the statement made by Lord Derby, that many people expected that the peers would yield, whatever their dislike to the Bill might be, indeed ought to do so after the opinion of the Commons had been declared, Lord Salisbury said, "I do not believe that the reputation, the character, or the influence of any man or body of men is to be preserved by perpetually thinking of what may be thought of their conduct out of doors. The motto for the House of Lords should be, 'Be just and fear not,' and be sure that if you fear you will not long be just. . . . Let us do what is just and right to all classes, and we may safely leave our authority, our influence, and our mediatorial power to the good sense and consideration of our countrymen."

The Lords responded to this challenge, and rejected the measure by a majority of 241; and although Mr. Gladstone had passionately declared that the evil proposed to be dealt with by the rejected Bill "almost amounted to a sentence of death," he meekly acquiesced in the defeat. From that moment he lost hold, not only of Ireland, but also of many thoughtful people in England, who considered that if the facts justified the introduction and defence of the Bill, they much more demanded a more resolute attempt at the reform of the alleged evils.

Encouraged by this victory, on the 26th of October

Lord Salisbury at Taunton again assailed the Ministry. He replied at length to the Parnellite statement that outrages in Ireland ought not to be reprobated too severely, because, said some people, in the remote past that island had suffered sore injustice at the hands of English people. "I believe," said Lord Salisbury, "the Duke of Cumberland misbehaved himself very much after Culloden, but I have never heard that the Highland tenants of the present day break the law in consequence. I believe in the very county where I stand Judge Jeffreys did a great many things which it would be impossible to defend, but I should be sorry to think that in going home to-night I should be less safe on that account, and run the risk of getting a bullet from some discontented descendant of one of Judge Jeffreys' victims. Property cannot be secured, nor can the healthy growth which is a necessity to every free community be maintained, if contracts are to be cancelled by the bullet."

Mr. Gladstone had, however, made up his mind, and he made no further attempt at remedial legislation, but permitted Ireland to drift into a terrible condition of anarchy. Outrages increased, the Land League usurped the functions of the Crown, and enforced its commands by means of terrors that it invented with terrible rapidity. "The whole social system is reduced to anarchy," said Lord Salisbury, "on the top of which is a cumbersome hypocrisy which calls itself the ordinary law; but the only effect, if there be any effect, is to

restrain and hinder those who would defend themselves. It has no efficacy in restraining or hindering those by whom these outrages are perpetrated and permitted. . . . If the landlords are delivered over for the winter to the tender mercies of the Land League, it may be hoped that they will be more pliable next spring, and will offer their fleeces more readily to the shearer than may desire to shear them. In other words, the present state of Ireland, all the anarchy and all the crimes committed in that country, are so many arguments for future legislation. Every person who is shot or carded or tarred and feathered contributes to bring revolutionary principles with regard to the land of Ireland within the range of practical politics. His example will have its effect, as the Clerkenwell outrage had, on the mind of Mr. Gladstone."

Mr. Gladstone at length decided that some measure of coercion was needful, and he summoned Parliament in 1881 for the purpose of passing a law with the intent to repress outrages. A turbulent scene ensued after the House had assembled, twenty-three members were forcibly expelled from Parliament, and after nine weeks of violence Mr. Gladstone rested from his labours, to the delight of the Parnellites.

The House of Lords passed a vote censuring the abandonment of Candahar, upon which motion Lord Salisbury delivered a vigorous speech, in the course of which he said that the Government were acting like the Federal generals in the American civil war, who

always spoke of a retreat as a strategic movement to the rear. The surrender of the Transvaal furnished him with another theme for complaint. He then pointed out that Mr. Gladstone had, by example, taught the native races of Africa that "when they trust to the English Government the probability is that they will be betrayed. . . . I fear," he continued, "that the course you have now taken, at the price of abandoning a great native population, while it may extricate you from your difficult complications, will leave behind a distrust in your fidelity to your engagements which will be fatal to our dominion in South Africa."

These attacks, taken in conjunction with Mr. Gladstone's vacillating imperiousness, alienated a large section of his followers. Lord Salisbury and his allies were surely if gradually undermining the feeble fabric erected with so much confidence at the fall of the Tories.

On the 19th of April Lord Beaconsfield died, and then for the first time his splendid courage and superb powers were adequately recognised by the nation. A meeting attended by 104 Conservative peers was called to elect a leader, and they selected Lord Salisbury as head of the Tory party in conjunction with Sir Stafford Northcote, who sometimes ruled the House of Commons by permission of the Fourth Party. The choice was unanimous, although it was known that some lords would have preferred to have followed Lord Carnarvon as leader.

The times, however, demanded a chief who could

be trusted to really lead in conflict, for both in Ireland and in England the social conditions confronting Parliament were terrible. The murder of Lord Frederic Cavendish and the revelations of Carey, the informer, created a profound distrust of the Parnellites, who, after intriguing with the Tories, were now in close alliance with the Government. In England the dynamitards resorted to the tactics which had proved so successful in Ireland, but with no effect on this side of the Channel except that of producing intense hatred against the criminals, which was permanent, and a panic, which soon subsided. Lord Salisbury brought under the notice of Parliament the fact that the Land League had been commended in an official pamphlet; that a Land Leaguer now held a legal office under the Crown, and, said he, "Since the Revolution, I imagine, Parliament has never met under such circumstances as are existing now. Has there been a time when the representatives of the people have been detained in prison by the authority of the Crown under a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act at the time when Parliament met? Has there ever been such a thing as 60,000 men being found necessary to keep up the faint vestiges of order now remaining in Ireland? Has it ever been the case that the Government, without authority, without warrant of law—trusting, I suppose, to the passing of a Bill of Indemnity by Parliament, which Parliament will no doubt readily grant—has seized newspapers by its own authority, and

not only in Ireland, but also in this country, and in such a manner that it could not have been known before seizure what they contained?"

Nor did he attack the Ministry in Parliament alone, for in April a series of meetings was held in Liverpool at which Lord Salisbury made frequent speeches. His main contention in them was that a return to peasant proprietorship was the most effectual remedy for the evils of Ireland.

After the murder of Lord Cavendish, while the Arrears Bill was still under consideration, Lord Salisbury desired his followers to offer it a strenuous opposition. His policy was to force a dissolution; had he succeeded, Mr. Gladstone would probably have been driven from office, and that for life; but the Conservative peers refused, for some inexplicable reason, to obey their leader, and the Kilmainham contract was fulfilled, with consequences yet to be fully realised.

The year 1883 was characterised by two articles from the pen of Lord Salisbury, one of which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*. It was entitled "Disintegration," and argued that under Mr. Gladstone the British Empire had been seriously weakened at home and abroad. "Half-a-century ago," said the writer, "the first feeling of an Englishman was for England. Now the sympathies of a powerful party are instinctively given to whatever is against England. It may be Boers or Baboos or Russians or Afghans, or only French speculators—the treatment these all

receive in their controversies with England is the same; whatever else may fail them, they can always count on the sympathies of the political party from whom during the last half-century the rulers of England have been mainly chosen."

The other article appeared in the *National Review*, and referred to the controversy that had been aroused by the publication of "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London." Lord Salisbury admitted the assertion made in the pamphlet, that in London the condition of the poor was deplorable; but he urged, first, that an important and exhaustive inquiry should be made into the mass of misery with a view of discovering its extent; and, second, that the nation should provide dwellings for the labourers who were employed in the Post Office, Customs, and Police. One important suggestion of the article was the compulsory sanitary inspection of those marvellous productions of speculative builders that abound in the suburbs of London. Lord Salisbury said, "You can hunt the poor about from place to place, oust them out of one place and drive them to another, but you will never reach the poor except through the people who care about them and watch over them."

Not content with writing, on the 4th of February 1884 Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords moved for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the housing of the poor. This was agreed to by the Government. The Commission, when appointed, consisted of the Prince of Wales, Lord Salisbury

himself, and many well-known leaders of political and social reform.

While thus busy with social projects, the conduct of the Government with regard to Egypt and the Soudan received due attention and censure from the Conservative leader, but without effecting any great improvement in the vacillating policy which cost Gordon his life.

A serious battle ensued when Mr. Gladstone introduced, on the 28th of February 1884, a Bill which extended household suffrage to the counties. On the 27th of June, after having passed the Commons, this Bill was read in the Lords, where it was met with an amendment most skilfully drawn. The Lords refused to consider the Bill until it was accompanied by a redistribution of seats, whereupon Mr. Gladstone pettishly withdrew his Bill, and announced an autumn session for the purpose of reintroducing and passing it through the Lords.

The interval between the summer and autumn sessions was spent by both political parties in agitation. The opportunity was too tempting for the extreme Radicals to let slip, and they initiated an agitation against the House of Lords. The Liberal party was apparently resolute in its determination to make no concession; but Lord Salisbury and other Tory leaders were not silent or inactive. Lord Salisbury delivered more than one fierce attack upon the Ministry, and especially upon Mr. Gladstone. He said of the Premier that the

latter "has been pre-eminent among statesmen for the rigour with which he has used a victory when he has obtained it—for the determination with which he has pressed to the utmost limit any advantage he has obtained over those opposed to him. It is not, therefore, to his hands that we should like to trust ourselves without condition and without defence."

The autumn session, thus stormily heralded, opened on 23rd of October; party spirit ran high, and some time was spent in mutual recrimination. At length a compromise was arranged between the combatants: it was agreed that Mr. Gladstone's Redistribution Bill should be submitted to Sir Stafford Northcote and his friends; the Lords agreeing to read the Franchise Bill for the third time while the Redistribution Bill was being read a second time in the Commons. Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote met Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and Sir Charles Dilke, and a Redistribution Bill far more liberal than Mr. Gladstone's was arranged and agreed upon. The Franchise Bill duly became law, and on the 6th of December the House adjourned until the 19th of the following February, when the Redistribution Bill was to be read *de die in diem*.

About a fortnight before the assembling of Parliament the news of Gordon's death reached England. On the 19th of February 1885 the House met under the shadow of that great national calamity, and Sir Stafford Northcote in the Commons, and Lord Salisbury in the Lords, gave notice of votes of censure. That in the Lower House

was defeated by a small majority ; Lord Salisbury was supported in the Lords by 189 as against 68 peers. In asking for an emphatic condemnation of Mr. Gladstone's delay in rescuing Gordon, as well as for the abandonment of the Soudan, Lord Salisbury said of the Ministry — " Their conduct at the beginning of the Egyptian affair has been analogous to their conduct at the end ; throughout there has been an unwillingness to come to any requisite decision till the last moment. There has been an absolute terror of fixing upon any settled course, and the result has been that, when the time came that external pressure forced a decision on some definite course, the moment for satisfactory action had already passed, and the measures that were taken were taken in haste, with little preparation, and often with little fitness for the emergencies with which they had had to cope. The conduct of the Government has been an alternation of periods of slumber and periods of rush. The rush, however vehement, has been too unprepared and too unintelligent to repair the damage which the period of slumber has effected." With regard to Egypt, and especially with regard to the Mahdi, " the Government, plunged in absolute torpor, seemed to have but one care : that they should escape the nominal responsibility, though real responsibility must inevitably attach to their action." When the peril of Khartoum was brought to their mind, " they adopted the absurd and Quixotic plan of taking advantage of the chivalry and devotion of one of the noblest spirits our

age has ever seen, by sending him forward on the impossible and hopeless errand of accomplishing by mere words and promises that which they had not the courage to do by force of arms. From that commencement, the abandonment of the Soudan to the mission of General Gordon, all our subsequent troubles arose." But the indictment contained in this speech did not disturb the placid course of the Ministry, and the Redistribution Bill was duly passed, with the result that the electorate of three millions was increased by the addition of ten million voters.

The Government prided themselves on this radical change in the constituency, and imagined themselves more secure of power because of the alteration thus effected. But they were rapidly and irresistibly hurrying to their doom, and unwittingly deciding their own fate.

On the 8th of June they were defeated in the House, and immediately resigned. The Queen was at first very unwilling to accept Mr. Gladstone's resignation, because the defeat had been on an amendment to the Budget. But Mr. Gladstone persisted in his desire to retire, and Lord Salisbury was sent for by the Queen. At the commencement of negotiations Lord Salisbury refused to accept office unless Mr. Gladstone promised to abstain from hostile criticism. This, of course, Mr. Gladstone declined to promise, and after a little natural hesitation, Lord Salisbury consented to assume the responsibilities of office. The new Ministry was regarded both by friends and foes as a mere stopgap, to be tolerated

until the general election, when it was expected, by the Liberals at least, that the new electorate would send Mr. Gladstone back to the Treasury. The five months of rustication would, it was hoped, efface the memory of the many disasters that had made Mr. Gladstone so unpopular, and he would commence afresh in the joy of a new start.

The new Prime Minister added the charge of the Foreign Office to his other duties, as being the most difficult post, and one in which Mr. Gladstone had blundered most. The Fourth Party received adequate compensation for their late guerilla services, and the united Conservatives settled down to the difficult task before them.

The price exacted by the Parnellites for their assistance in dethroning the late Ministry had to be paid to the utmost, and, to the scandal of those who regarded Mr. Parnell as the apostle of violence, the detested Crimes Act was abandoned, and that by men who had denounced the Parnellites as traitors and ruffians; a Land Purchase Act was promised, and the Irish Labourers Act was pushed forward with feverish energy. In spite of Lord Salisbury's former fervent appeals for a regular and impartial administration of the law—appeals that were, however, uttered from the Opposition benches—Lord Spencer was abandoned and an inquiry ordered into the Maamtrasna murders.

The Budget was revised, when it was found that £900,000 had been spent at the Admiralty in excess

of the Estimates. This trifle had been forgotten or held back; some one had blundered, or worse.

The new Irish Land Bill, introduced as part of the price demanded for Parnell's assistance, suggested that the State should advance the purchase-money needful for tenants to acquire their holdings, one-fifth of it being held back by the Commissioners until the instalments due from the tenants had come into their hands. Lord Salisbury also brought in and passed a Bill which allowed electors who had been so unfortunate as to have received poor-law medical relief to vote; he embodied the undisputed points of the report of the Commission on Housing the Poor into a Bill, and, moreover, he gave a Sanitary Bill to Scotland. The session closed on the 14th of August, leaving the Conservatives stronger than ever, and enjoying the satisfaction that they had passed some remarkable measures of reform.

Abroad, the new Ministry arranged the dispute with Russia, which had become dangerous; they soothed South Africa, and, with difficulty, made friends with Germany, irritated into intense enmity by the vacillating policy and want of tact exhibited by the late Ministry. Egypt, alas! was in too great confusion to be speedily set right, but a vigorous beginning was made to re-organise the nation on a new basis.

In preparing for the general election, the Liberals exhibited great skill in their strategy, for while Mr. Chamberlain preached the doctrine of ransom, which promised to tax the rich for the benefit of the

poor, and thus appealed to one section of the people, the Radicals, Mr. Gladstone confined the programme to Local Government, the reform of Parliamentary procedure, the reform of Registration and Land Transfer, in order to retain the support of his Whig adherents. Mr. Chamberlain was not disavowed, but Mr. Gladstone maintained a discreet ambiguity in reference to the suggested changes. And so the election came on.

The Irish vote was regarded as the great prize, and for it both parties made high bids. Mr. Chamberlain offered Mr. Parnell government by four independent Provincial Parliaments, but Lord Carnarvon outbid him and purchased the Irish vote for the Tories. Lord Carnarvon was at the time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and arranged with his friend Mr. Justin M'Carthy the terms of the surrender. Mr. Parnell had a personal interview with Lord Carnarvon before the bargain was concluded, when he covenanted for an independent Legislature, which should possess authority to levy protective duties upon English imports. Lord Salisbury refused to definitely commit his Cabinet to Home Rule, but he permitted Lord Carnarvon to retain office, and generously purposed employing his intrigue without accepting the responsibility for it. Mr. Parnell amply fulfilled his pledges : he issued a manifesto which fiercely attacked the Liberal party. Mr. Gladstone retorted by asking to be made independent of the Irish vote. The elections began on the 24th of November, and when they were concluded, it was discovered that

Mr. Gladstone had secured a majority, mainly by means of Mr. Chamberlain's doctrine of ransom. "Three acres and a cow" had indeed given him 333 followers, as against 251 Conservatives and 86 Parnellites.

The Government, it is true, by attempting a settlement on Lord Carnarvon's lines, might hope for help from the Radicals, but that assistance was most uncertain. They knew that if they secured the Parnellites, the Ulster vote would be given against them, and they would then be left in a minority of eight. Mr. Gladstone saw their embarrassment, and he recognised the fact that, even supposing all his followers proved ductile and teachable, he could only secure power by favour of the Parnellites. A mysterious paragraph, therefore, crept from a provincial newspaper into the daily press. This said, in accents of authority, that Mr. Gladstone was delightfully willing to examine the claim for Home Rule. He had, of course, been unable to consider the question before, for while in high office other concerns had exhausted his energies, while the claims of Rome, the Homeric controversies, and Biblical criticism had absorbed all the leisure of Opposition. The aged student was therefore willing to be taught facts that ought to have been well known to a Prime Minister who had ruled England.

On the 21st of January 1886 the Queen opened Parliament in person, and in the course of the discussion upon the Queen's speech Mr. Gladstone contrived to make himself understood by Mr. Parnell. His over-

tures were received with rapture, and it was heartily agreed to unseat the Ministry. The "three acres and a cow" had proved so remarkably helpful at the polls that it was selected as the best weapon to clear away the obstructive Government. With the most affecting sympathy for rural voters the House voted, leaving Lord Salisbury in a minority of 71.

Lord Salisbury at once resigned, and by Saturday February 6th Mr. Gladstone's third Administration was in power, but it was observed by many that some of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues were not included in the new Cabinet, although some known Home Rulers were installed in office. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan joined Mr. Gladstone on the understanding that the policy of the Ministry was merely to inquire into the Home Rule demand. In the spring it was announced that those two Ministers had resigned, and on the 8th of April Mr. Gladstone propounded his new scheme.

On the 14th of April a great meeting was held at Her Majesty's Opera House to protest against the proposal to grant Home Rule to Ireland. Lord Salisbury was present and proposed a resolution. He was greeted with cheers lasting some minutes, the audience rising *en masse*, and waving hats and handkerchiefs with much enthusiasm.

Lord Salisbury said: "My lords, ladies and gentlemen, previous speakers have made something of an apology for the meeting upon this common platform of men of different parties engaged in defending the

supreme interests of the Empire. I think that no apology is necessary, but if it be necessary, I think their apology will cover me. We are dealing with a question of immeasurably greater importance than any of the subjects of our political controversies and discussions. We are suddenly confronted with a great danger to the Empire. Statesmen who have always maintained the integrity of the Empire, suddenly, in obedience to some great delusion or to some fanatical interpretation of the obligations of party, have in a few weeks wheeled suddenly round, and, in the words of the ancient king, have determined 'to burn that which they adored, and to adore that which they burnt.' Home Rule, which a year ago was a chimera, has suddenly become a burning question. It needs no apology from us if, in presence of so great a calamity threatening our nation, we put aside all minor differences and join hands to defend that which is equally precious to us all. It seems to me that it required more than his common courage for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to taunt us with the variety of opinions that would meet upon this common platform. What is the variety of opinions that meet in support of the Government Bill? Who would have thought that the man who in January taunted his adversaries with the prospect of stewing in the Parnellite juice would in March be Mr. Parnell's humble standard-bearer and server?

"Now in support of our view in this matter there is no necessity that we should enter upon any party

questions or touch any disputable points. The late debates have been largely occupied with congratulations to the Prime Minister upon the astonishing character of the effort which he recently made. I am quite willing to join in these congratulations, but they seem to me to be an element of the case which I have to support. If eloquence so great, experience so consummate, and influence so large cannot produce a reasonable or tolerable measure of Home Rule, I conclude that such a measure cannot be produced at all. I naturally feel, as other speakers feel, that the splendid discussion to which many men on my right and left have contributed in magnificent proportions robs of interest any examination which we may now make of the details of the Government proposal. I would rather ask you to look upon the result of that discussion as a whole, and I think you will observe, not only in the splendid speeches to which I have referred, but also in the still more eloquent and significant omissions and silence of the Government—you will observe, I say, that the securities which are supposed to separate this project of Home Rule from a project of absolute separation have been shattered and driven to the winds. It is not that the greatest efforts have not been made; but the problem is absolutely insoluble.

“ You have a free trade people in this country very jealous of the possibility of the imposition of protective duties, and secondly, a Minister professing himself a staunch champion of fiscal unity. But it is absolutely

impossible to give fiscal freedom to the Parliament of Ireland and to preserve fiscal unity for the British Empire. The two things are contradictions in terms. You cannot refuse to the Parliament of Ireland the power of dealing with their own customs' duties, and you cannot give that power to the Parliament of England without contradicting what has been stated as a fundamental doctrine of all free countries—that representation shall follow taxation. In the same way with the presence of the Irish members in the British Parliament. I suppose there is no person here who does not earnestly hope that, if by any unfortunate destiny such a scheme as this were to be carried out, at least the moderate compensation of getting rid of the Irish members should be granted to us. But when you pass from the region of sentiment and begin to examine the proposition by the light of principle, you see at once that to demand from the Irish nation four millions a year in contribution to the military and other expenses of the Empire, and to refuse them all share in the councils of the Empire, is to give them, not freedom, but servitude. There, again, you come across a contradiction and a difficulty which are inherent in the matter, and which no ingenuity could have overcome. In the same way also with the protection of minorities. Ingenious efforts have been made to provide a Parliament which shall be in name omnipotent, and yet which shall not have the power to oppress minorities. But there is a contradiction in the terms—in the

nature of the thing. The securities that have been provided are absolutely illusory, and if you give to the Parliament of Ireland the full and free government of Ireland, you must give to it, too, that which it would be most dangerous to give—an absolute disposal over the lot of the minorities. Therefore, the great result which I hope from the brilliant debates that have taken place is that the conviction will be carried home to the British people that there is no middle term between government at Westminster and independent and entirely separate government at Dublin. If you do not have a Government in some form or other issuing from this centre you must have absolute separation. Federation, of course, is an idea that is conceivable. We know that it exists in Austria, Germany, and America. But we know also that the conditions which are necessary for it are wanting in this country. It is not within our political horizon. It belongs to the region of political ideals rather than to practical realities. But set federation aside; if you give any freedom of internal government to the Parliament of Ireland, I hold that it has been established by the arguments of those who have spoken, as well as by the tacit admission of the Government, that there is nothing between you and absolute separation. Now, I ask you to look at what separation means. It means the cutting off from the British Islands of a province tied to them by the hand of Nature. It is hard to find a parallel instance in the

contemporary world, because the tendency of events has been in the opposite direction. In every country you find that consolidation and not severance has been the object which statesmen have pursued, and it is very intelligible why they should have done so. Severance was a necessity of a state of things when communications were rare and difficult, and in proportion as science has brought all parts of the world nearer together, and has abolished distance, in that proportion consolidation, which is the ideal that States should follow, has become more easy, and almost every statesman has followed. But there is one exception.

“There is a State in Europe which has had very often to hear the word autonomy, which has had more than once to grant Home Rule and to see separation following Home Rule. The State I have referred to is our good friend and ally the Empire of Turkey. Let any one who thinks that separation is consistent with the strength and prosperity of the country look to its effect—its repeated effect—when applied to another country of which he can judge more impartially. Turkey had first to give autonomy to Roumania—autonomy was followed by independence; it had to give autonomy to Servia—autonomy was followed by independence. Turkey has also had to give autonomy to Bulgaria and Roumelia, and I will not prophesy what the next step will be. Do not imagine that I am expressing any opinion of the desirability of these proceedings. Turkey is a decaying empire; England, I

hope, is not. But I want to point out to you by a striking and conspicuous example that this process of giving autonomy to provinces, which is certain to slide into separation, is not consistent with the prosperity or the maintenance of an empire.

“But I frankly admit that this is not the only reason which urges me, and urges many of those who think with us, to press with all our earnestness upon you to resist this scheme. The point that the Government have persistently ignored is, that Ireland is not occupied by a homogeneous and united people. In proportions which are differently stated, which some people state as four-fifths to one-fifth, but which I should be more inclined to state as two-thirds to one-third, the Irish people are deeply divided—divided not only by creed, which may extend into both camps, but divided by history and by a long succession of animosities which the conflicts that have lasted during centuries have created. We have been asked whether we did not believe the Irish people to be of the same kind as other human beings; whether we have any special reason to distrust them, or to attribute to them, as has been said, a double dose of original sin. Whether the sin be original or acquired, I do not venture to determine. But I confess it seems to me that Whiteboy associations, and Moonlight associations, and Riband associations, and murders committed at night and in the open day, and a constant disregard to all the rights of property (interruption, during which a man was

turned out). These things must make us doubt the angelic character which it is desired to attribute to the Irish peasantry. I do not for a moment maintain that they are, in their nature, any worse than other people ; but I say there are circumstances attaching to Ireland—circumstances derived from history that is past and gone through many generations—circumstances derived from conflicts which are centuries old—which make it impossible for us to believe that if liberty—entire liberty—were suddenly given to them, they would be able to forget the animosities of centuries, and to treat those who were placed in their power for the first time with perfect justice and equity. You must not imagine that with the wave of a wand by any Minister, however powerful, the effects of centuries of conflict and exasperation can be wiped away. You must use your common sense in these matters. Would you yourselves trust any man, or set of men, you had known for years to entertain a savage spirit of resentment ? Would you trust them with absolute freedom to carry out that resentment to any extent, and would you consider yourself answered if you were told that by distrust you were imputing to them a double dose of original sin ?

“Now this is, I hope, the commencement of a great many meetings which will take place in various parts of England. I hope, in the first instance, that these meetings will rouse up the people to study and appreciate the terrible gravity of the problem placed before

them, and to resist this tremendous change in the Constitution of their country. But I hope that such meetings will rouse them to do something more. They have not taken sufficient part, or given sufficient support to those who have been charged with the responsibility of governing Ireland. Many recriminations have been cast from party to party. My noble friend in the chair intimated that if he were driven to it he could say some very unpleasant things about the Conservative party with regard to the past. I am not here to recriminate or to defend any particular party. I know that men of responsible position have often to choose between two evils, and they may not always be perfectly right in the course they select. But I want to thrust aside, as utter rubbish, this recrimination between parties, which really will not help us forward a single step towards the solution of the terrible problems we have to face. What I want to ask you to bear in mind is, that such is the Constitution of our country, that no leader, however powerful he may be, or however resolute he may be, can effect legislation which is vigorously opposed by a few unless it is heartily supported by the many. There is a limit to the power of any political party or leader in the legislation which they can pass. That limit is determined by the amount of support which they receive from the sober and sensible opinion of this country. Our Constitution is such that the resistance of a determined minority, even if that minority be small, can overbear the decision of a

large majority if that large majority be slack ; and the people of this country, now that power is entirely in their hands, must take this consideration to their minds. They must recognise the responsibility which is cast upon them.

“ My belief is that the future government of Ireland does not involve any such unmanageable difficulty, for the people of this country will be true to the empire to which they belong. We want a wise, firm, continuous administration of the law. But you must support it, or it will not take place. We want a steady policy—that no considerations of weariness or difficulty at Westminster, that no considerations attaching to the manifold ties of party government under which we live shall drive aside from its strong course the policy upon which the people of England have decided. It is not enough for them to decide it. They must watch over it when it is decided ; they must by their constant and steady support, by the overwhelming force of their will, sweep away this body of resistance which has hitherto at Westminster prevented anything like a steady, or constant, or wholesome policy for Ireland ; for this matter, believe me, does not concern Ireland alone. There is a great responsibility upon you, and it will be a terrible thing if, through your weakness, the Irish people are abandoned to the anarchy under which assuredly they will fall. But there is something more which you, as the owners of a vast empire extending to the ends of the earth, must

consider before you take this fatal step downwards to which your rulers are inviting you now. There has been a great contest between England and the discontented portion of the Irish people. It is a contest that has lasted through many generations past, through many vicissitudes, and now you are asked to submit to a measure which is placed before you, and to end that contest by a complete and ignominious surrender. It is not a surrender marked by the more ordinary circumstances of ignominy. It is a painful thing for a nation to lose a great battle and to have to acknowledge defeat. It is a painful thing if that defeat entails the loss of territory, and the nation has to be contented with a restricted empire. But these things do not represent the depth of infamy to which you will descend. There is something worse than all this, and that is when defeat is marked by the necessity of abandoning to your enemies those whom you have called upon to defend you, and who have risked their all on your behalf. That is an infamy below which it is impossible to go; that is an infamy to which you are asked to submit yourselves now. Do not believe that that injury which you will undergo will be a mere sentimental injury. You have interests in every part of the world; you have wide and broad domains which are far more important than Ireland is in any sense to your Imperial crown, where, if the question of Home Rule is raised, if any doubt of England's power reaches the popular imagination,

you will have to confront disasters with which nothing in your history can be compared. Your course is watched all over the world; if you consent to this great capitulation; if you mark it with these last signs of disgrace that you abandoned those whom you induced to fight for you; if, like the Russian traveller, you lighten the sledge for your own flight by throwing out your defenders to the wolves, believe me that it will not be a mere sentimental punishment that you will suffer. Your enemies in every part of the world will be looking on what you do with exultation. Your friends, your supporters, your partisans will view it with shame, with confusion, and with dismay in every quarter of the globe."

The Home Rule Bill was rejected, and on the 26th of June Parliament was dissolved, and a general election followed, which was taken primarily upon the question of Home Rule. On the one hand, it was asserted by Mr. Gladstone's party that Home Rule was the only alternative to coercion, while the Unionists, on the contrary, promised to dispense with coercion and yet pacify Ireland. It was found, when the returns were complete, that 316 Tories, 76 Liberal Unionists, 192 Gladstonians, and 86 Parnellites were duly elected. Mr. Gladstone at once resigned, and Lord Salisbury was summoned to wait upon the Queen.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM CHAOS TO PROSPERITY.

“No action, whether foul or fair,
Is ever done, but it leaves somewhere
A record, written by fingers ghostly,
As a blessing or a curse, and mostly
In the greater weakness or greater strength
Of the acts which follow it, till at length
The wrongs of ages are redressed,
And the justice of God made manifest.”

“Of all the persons I ever knew, he had the greatest power of extracting talents from others. No matter what it was, he would make them either work for him or work with him. He could never tolerate drones.”—Mr. FOSTER *on George Moore.*

1886-1891.

GENEROSITY OF LORD SALISBURY—THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN
—PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE LANDLORDS—TRAFALGAR
SQUARE RIOTS—RESIGNATION OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL
AND CONSEQUENT CHANGES—MR. BALFOUR SECRETARY
FOR IRELAND—JUBILEE REJOICINGS—COUNTY COUNCILS
FOUNDED—TITHE-RENT BILLS—THE SWEATING SYSTEM—
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE—LICENSING PROPOSALS—THE
MONTH OF MUTINIES—FREE EDUCATION.

LORD SALISBURY, when he formed his Cabinet, was naturally anxious to secure the counsel and assistance of the Liberal Unionists. He even offered to forego his own

claim to the Premiership in favour of Lord Hartington. The latter declined this generous offer, and the Ministry was probably the stronger because it was Conservative, for England does not love coalitions. Lord Iddesleigh became Foreign, and Mr. Matthews Home Secretary; Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was first appointed and then deposed from the dignity of leader of the House of Commons in favour of Lord Randolph Churchill, who also was made Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The chief difficulty of the Ministry, of course, was in Ireland, where the tenant-farmers were intensely dissatisfied with the low rents that had been fixed by the Commission. Lord Salisbury, perhaps despondent at the apparent hopelessness of his task, expressed his willingness to accept a Land Purchase Scheme, qualified by the proviso that the state ought to replace some part at least of the loss to the landlords.

Mr. Parnell, on his own responsibility, introduced a Bill intended to reduce the rents; and when this project was rejected, Mr. Dillon advised the tenants to pay only what they could afford, or thought they could afford, as rent for their holdings. He counselled them to combine together, and then to offer what they themselves considered to be a fair rent for the land; and if, as was antecedently probable, this amount was refused, to deposit the money in the hands of trustees, who should be empowered to spend it in resisting eviction. This scheme became known as the "Plan of Campaign," and it very speedily became popular in Ireland.

The Ministry, after making inquiries, decided that there was some truth in Mr. Parnell's assertions, and in consequence they put pressure upon the landlords to induce them to accept substantial reductions of the rents.

In London the distress among the unemployed induced some politicians to revive the Protectionist movement by meetings held in Trafalgar Square. On the 8th of February the Socialists also held a demonstration in the same place, and, owing to defective police arrangements, a wild mob ran riot through Pall Mall and Piccadilly. They sacked the shops, smashed the club windows, and created great panic in London and its suburbs before they were put down.

The Indian and Colonial Exhibition was opened on the 4th of May, and the meeting of delegates from various divisions of the British Empire prompted or strengthened the now vigorous desire for Imperial Federation.

The autumn of 1886 is memorable because it witnessed the widening of the breach between Mr. Gladstone and the Unionists. Lord Randolph Churchill, who had been lifted into a place of power by Lord Salisbury, suddenly resigned his office, and the Premier again invited Lord Hartington to join the Cabinet. Although the leader of the Liberal Unionists himself declined to accept the offer, Mr. Goschen became Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the full approval and consent of his chief and colleagues.

A speech made by Lord Salisbury during the recess

of this year created much public interest. It advocated the cause of Austria, then resisting the claim made by Russia to be allowed to interfere in the internal government of the Balkan Peninsula when she desired so to do. It was currently reported that England had entered into an arrangement with Austria-Hungary, by which she had pledged herself to take part against Russia in the event of the Czar declaring war. The treaty answered its purpose, and prevented a dreaded outbreak of hostilities, which would have marred a memorable and approaching function, viz., the jubilee of the accession of the present sovereign.

The year 1887 was selected by the Queen for the celebration of this event. The year opened somewhat inauspiciously for the Government, already embarrassed by the pettish resignation of Lord Randolph Churchill. At the time, although that statesman was regarded as a democratic free lance, he was considered to be of immense importance to the Ministry. His resignation was soon discovered to have rather strengthened than weakened the Cabinet, but indirectly it was harmful to the Conservatives. Lord Salisbury took the Foreign Office into his own hands, displacing Lord Iddesleigh, and the leadership of the House of Commons was intrusted to Mr. W. H. Smith, who also became First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord Iddesleigh, thus displaced, died somewhat suddenly on the 13th of January 1887. He had arranged to speak at the Mansion House in the after-

noon of the day named, and had expressed a wish to see Lord Salisbury before the meeting. He reached the official residence of the First Lord of the Treasury at a quarter before three, and the messenger was announcing his arrival to Lord Salisbury when he was heard to groan. Medical aid was summoned at once, but it was unable to prolong his life. The intrigue which was thus closed seriously damaged the Ministry among those who had esteemed the courtesy, talents, and conscientiousness of the deceased statesman.

Parliament opened on the 27th of January, and the speech from the throne indicated a Land Bill for Ireland as possible and a Coercion Bill as certain. These indications of hostility provoked the Parnellites, and they obstructed business so effectually that on the 21st of February the Ministry introduced some new rules of procedure which permitted a bare majority of the House, provided two hundred members were present, to apply the closure. In the following year this two hundred was lowered to one-half. The debate on these rules lasted through fifteen nights, but they were eventually carried. •

In Ireland, the Secretary, on the one hand, put stronger pressure upon the landlords in order to induce them to lower their rents, while the authors of the Plan of Campaign were prosecuted at law, and without success in either case; for while the landlords murmured, the jury refused to convict the Parnellites.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, acting on medical advice,

resigned, and Lord Salisbury appointed his nephew, Mr. Arthur James Balfour, Chief Secretary for Ireland.

On the 28th of March Mr. Balfour introduced the Crimes Bill, which proposed to empower any two Irish magistrates with summary jurisdiction in cases of criminal conspiracy, boycotting, assaults on the police, or inciting to commit all or any of these crimes. These magistrates had power to inflict six months' imprisonment upon any offenders they deemed guilty. The Lord-Lieutenant was also authorised to proclaim certain associations as dangerous, which act would bring all who were connected with them under the penalties of the Bill. The measure was intended to be a permanent one, a feature which greatly added to the hostility of the Irish party. They discussed and delayed the progress of the Bill as long as they dared, but on the 17th of June the closure was applied. The Irish members thereupon left the House in a body; the Gladstonians followed them after the division, and the measure speedily became law. On the 19th of August the Lord-Lieutenant proclaimed the National League as a dangerous association; this enabled Mr. Balfour to suppress any branch of it that he deemed to be dangerous.

The Government also introduced a Land Bill, which, at Mr. Parnell's suggestion, admitted leaseholders to the benefits conferred upon others by the Act of 1881, permitted the court to stay the execution of an ejectment writ, and which further aided bankrupt

farmers, who by it were to be continued in their holdings.

Many of the measures promised in the Queen's speech were abandoned, but a Bill regulating coal-mines, an Allotment Bill, and a Bill to prevent the sale of animal fat as butter became law.

The Budget of the year was described by Mr. Goschen himself as hum-drum, and it gave but little satisfaction even to Conservatives.

These murmurs were speedily hushed by the preparations which were made for celebrating the Queen's jubilee throughout the United Kingdom. A national memorial—the Imperial Institute—was founded, but each town commemorated the jubilee as it deemed best. Public parks, libraries, hospitals, and other contributions to the public well-being and comfort were set apart as a commemorative of the unparalleled event.

On the 23rd of March the Queen visited Birmingham, where she was received with great loyalty. On the 4th of May she received the representatives of the Colonial Governments, who represented nine millions of people speaking the English tongue and content with British rule. The great celebration was on the 21st of June, when the Queen went in state from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, everywhere received with tumultuous enthusiasm. The national festivities were only marred by disloyal riots in Cork and Dublin. The Queen took the opportunity

to manifest her sense of Lord Salisbury's merits by visiting him at Hatfield.

Parliament met on the 9th of February 1888, and during the spring session was occupied with measures of considerable importance. The Queen's speech announced that an Anglo-Russian Commission was engaged in determining the Afghan boundary with a view to prevent disputes in the future. A mission had also been sent, without success, to Abyssinia, in order to dissuade that semi-barbarous power from an unequal war with Italy.

On the 18th of March Mr. Ritchie, President of the Local Government Board, introduced an important Bill, which, by the creation of County Councils, has revolutionised the social government of England and Wales. Three-fourths of the members of these Councils were to be elected by the burgesses and electors of the county; and the councillors themselves were to select the remaining fourth, who were to be called aldermen.

The levying of rates, the granting of licenses, the control of lunatic asylums and industrial schools, the maintenance of roads, and indeed the whole financial and administrative business of the county was placed under the authority thus created. The City of London was constituted a distinct county for control, and the Metropolitan area was arranged as another county, the latter to be ruled by 118 councillors, who took over the functions and responsibilities formerly belonging to

the defunct Metropolitan Board of Works. The first County Council Elections were fixed for January 1889.

In March Lord Salisbury introduced two Bills, respectively entitled the Tithe-Rent Charge Bill and the Tithe-Rent Charge Recovery and Variation Bill. The first placed tithe in the same position as the income-tax, which is payable by the landlord through the tenant. The second Bill appointed receivers, who should be empowered to attach land upon which the tithe had not been paid. The Government scheme included a third Bill in which it was proposed to provide for tithe redemption. The first two Bills safely passed the Lords, and were sent down by them to the Commons.

The Premier also introduced a Bill into the House of Lords which was intended to reform that branch of the legislature by the creation of life peers.

This was in May, the month in which Lord Salisbury appeared as a witness in the action brought by Mr. Peters against Mr. Bradlaugh.

A Lords Committee was also appointed to inquire into the alleged sweating among the East London workers. The Committee on the 30th of July reported the existence of grave evils of this kind in the district they had selected for examination, and at their own request they were empowered to inquire into the sweating system in the United Kingdom generally.

But next to the creation of the County Councils perhaps the most remarkable measure of the session was the Bill which created a Board of Agriculture.

This new Board, while discharging some of the functions formerly exercised by the Privy Council, was to prepare and collect statistics, to make inquiries and experiments, and to provide scientific education so far as it related to agriculture. The Bill was introduced on the 11th of August by Mr. W. H. Smith.

In November Sir Charles Warren resigned the Chief Commissionership of the Police. He had incurred much obloquy from the manner in which he had regulated the meetings in Trafalgar Square, and the publication of an article in *Murray's Magazine* led to a controversy which was terminated by his retirement.

The year 1890 opened under somewhat unusual circumstances. The Portuguese, presuming upon their own weakness and the many benefits their nation had received from England, continued to harrass and annoy the British colonists in South-Eastern Africa. As remonstrances proved unavailing, on the 12th of January Lord Salisbury despatched an ultimatum to Lisbon, insisting on an immediate and unequivocal acceptance of the British terms. The Portuguese, foiled in their projects, accepted the treaty thus forced upon them, but they exhibited the most remarkable animosity against England. The British Consulate was mobbed, and it really appeared as if the whole nation had lost its reason.

Parliament met on the 11th of February, and among the Ministerial proposals was one which aroused intense excitement in England. The Local Taxation

Bill proposed to levy a tax upon beer and spirits, from the proceeds of which £350,000 was to be spent in compensation for such public-house licenses as might be withdrawn by the County Councils.

The agitation which ensued, and the narrow majorities they obtained, warned the Government of the animosity aroused, and they withdrew their proposals. But, at the same time, they announced their intention to " earmark " the £350,000, which they hoped to expend at a future date in compensation for suppressed licenses. But the Speaker warned them that to do so would be unconstitutional, and the licensing clauses were thereupon unreservedly withdrawn.

The report of the Lords' Committee on Sweating, published about this time, revealed a depth of wrong and suffering beyond the fears of the most pessimistic, but no active measures were adopted to remedy the evils complained of—perhaps none were possible.

The housing of the poor received some slight attention, but not sufficient to remove the gross evils discovered in London.

The month of July 1890 was a memorable era in the history of the Government.

The dispute with Portugal in reference to Delagoa Bay was referred to three arbitrators, who were to be chosen by Switzerland. The controversy which had been waged with the United States of America concerning the Behring's Sea seal-fishery entered a stage which

provoked a firm declaration from Lord Salisbury, who would not admit the exclusive claims made by the Republic.

With regard to France, our neighbours claimed the whole stretch of African territory extending from Algeria down to Timbuctoo and the Niger. Lord Salisbury offered to allow the claim made by France to a protectorate over Madagascar, to cede Gambia, and a portion of another district.

On the 1st of July an agreement was signed with Germany whereby the Empire acquired Heligoland and an awkward section of Nyassaland in Africa—cessions of territory which, however needful, were decidedly unpopular in England.

On the 28th of the same month Lord Salisbury found it needful to defend the union of the two offices of Foreign Minister and Premier in one person. His speech on this theme in the House of Lords was a remarkable utterance.

This month was stained by three mutinies, which were, it is true, stamped out before they became very serious, but which, occurring simultaneously, grievously shook the public security. On the 5th of July the police, who had always been regarded as a remarkably loyal and well-disciplined body of men, mutinied at Bow Street and Covent Garden. It was admitted that they had been treated somewhat harshly, but the revolt of those who should have been the guardians of others, was alarming.

On the 9th, the Grenadier Guards, irritated by the martinet control of their officers, refused to obey orders. The oldest man in every mutinous company was court-martialled, two men were sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, and three to imprisonment for eighteen months; and the Duke of Cambridge harshly reproved the whole regiment, which, under another commander, was exiled to Bermuda. The mutiny was of the mildest possible character, but it disturbed the public mind.

On the 9th of July, the London postmen, who had long chafed under Mr. Raikes' rule, showed signs of discontent. Instead of dealing kindly and firmly with the alleged grievances, Mr. Raikes provoked a conflict by peremptorily suspending four hundred letter-carriers. The postmen attempted to bring about a general strike of letter-carriers, but they failed, partly from lack of organisation, but chiefly because they had no funds to carry on the conflict successfully. Although the men did not receive the amount of public support that they expected, Mr. Raikes became decidedly unpopular, much to the detriment of the Ministry.

The month of September witnessed the appearance of potato blight in Ireland, an addition to its chronic troubles, which was hailed by an outburst of agitation. Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon were arrested for their advocacy of resistance to the law, which act was the theme of many hostile Liberal speeches.

The Anglo-Portuguese Convention, which was completed about this time, was so unpopular at Lisbon that the Portuguese Ministry were compelled to resign their seats, and the existence of the monarchy was threatened. The new Ministry, who succeeded to office on the 15th of October, repudiated the agreement in question.

On the 10th of October Messrs. O'Brien and Dillon forfeited their bail and went to America; and the decision in the Parnell-O'Shea divorce suit removed Mr. Parnell from his high place, and commenced the inevitable feud in the Home Rule party.

The rejection of the Anglo-Portuguese agreement led in November to a conflict in Africa, when a party of Portuguese attacked a British outpost. But ten days after this incident the British received reinforcements, renewed the conflict, and hauled down the rival flag. While this mimic warfare was waging in Africa, the Cabinets of London and Lisbon had come to an agreement that for a time the debateable land about which the quarrel originated should be left alone. The Portuguese, incensed at the sturdy resistance offered to their aggression, threatened to declare war.

In February 1891 Lord Salisbury, undeterred by this awful threat, made a speech upon electricity at the banquet held to commemorate the jubilee of the Chemical Society, which excited much attention for its grasp and skilful arrangement of facts.

In March Lord Salisbury signed a convention which

referred the Anglo-French dispute in Newfoundland to arbitration. The Newfoundlanders, on their part, concluded an agreement in which they gave more favourable terms to America than to Britain or Canada. This treaty Lord Salisbury was compelled to disallow, much to the annoyance of Newfoundland.

On the 21st of April Lord Salisbury made a great speech at the annual gathering of the Primrose League, in the course of which he said that the League numbered more than a million adherents.

The Budget of the year was highly gratifying, for it announced that two millions of money were at Mr. Goschen's disposal. This surplus was assigned to provide free education for the people.

On the 20th of May Lord Salisbury was presented with the freedom of Glasgow, and took the opportunity of explaining his policy with regard to Africa. He had proposed, in return for the recognition of British rights in the disputed territory, to recognise Portuguese sovereignty over 50,000 square miles lying north of the Zambesi.

"We have come to the conclusion," he said, "with respect to the occupation of territory which I believe will be beneficial to both parties if our present proposals are accepted. The territory we shall recognise as belonging to South Africa is highland, on which white men can work and settle; and the peculiarity of English rule is, that we are not satisfied with ruling over the natives, but that we should fill the land

with our own people and with our own blood. All the land on the bank of the Zambesi, and which we have offered to Portugal in exchange, and to which we think she has some historical claim, is land which can only be dealt with by those born in the country and having the blood of the country."

Which phrase was interpreted by Mr. Stead to mean, "Wherever white men can live and breed and settle in South-Eastern Africa, the land belongs to England; wherever they weaken and die, it is left to Portugal."

In the month of July the German Emperor visited London. He was entertained with municipal magnificence by the City of London, and on the 12th of July, accompanied by the Empress, he paid a visit to Lord Salisbury at Hatfield. The interview was more than a courtesy; it was interpreted as the acquiescence of England in the policy of peace that France was anxious to disturb. Another distinguished visitor, the Prince of Naples, was entertained at Hatfield on the 25th of July.

On the 10th of August Mr. Balfour made a speech at Plymouth in which he announced the intention of the Government to establish County Councils in Ireland. These new local Parliaments were to exercise control over local taxation, and to really govern all county interests, only the police being withheld from their command. This device was intended as a compromise with the Home Rulers, but the Parnellites did not rejoice at the announcement.

On the 1st of September 1891 the Free Education

Act came into operation. This remarkable measure, destined to effect a social revolution among the poor, and hence to re-make the nation, provided for the payment of ten shillings per year per scholar to elementary schools. The children in view were those from five to fourteen years of age, and as the amount named was equal to a fee of threepence per week, it tended to materially lessen the cost of education. The School Boards after the passing of the Act determined to dispense with fees in the schools named, so that since the 1st of September 1891 a movement has set in, the consequences of which may be estimated, but which will probably surpass the most sanguine expectation of the benefits accruing to all classes from the new departure. The days of ignorance are happily doomed in England, and a free people are becoming an educated, and therefore a skilful and prosperous nation. It is remarkable that such a stupendous change should have come about under the rule of the party supposed by some to be most hostile to enlightenment and progress.

On the 15th October Mr. Balfour, who had been steadily growing into favour by his firm rule of Ireland, was appointed leader of the House of Commons. Mr. W. H. Smith, who had held that position with credit, had died somewhat suddenly, and the unanimous wish of the Conservatives was that the nephew of the Premier should succeed to the vacant post. It is not too much to say that Mr. Balfour has more than justified his uncle's choice; he has built up a first-

class reputation by his skilful control of somewhat turbulent spirits.

On the 9th of November 1891 Lord Salisbury at the Mansion House said—

“With respect to foreign affairs, there is always a certain difficulty and responsibility, because the speaker is apt to be suspected of intending to assume the mantle of a prophet. I desire entirely to disclaim that intention. We have had a good deal of prophecy of late—that called meteorology. We are told of things that are certainly to happen in a year’s time. Well, I am not here to discuss those prophecies, but I think confident predictions, when they are to the advantage of the predictor, are sometimes a mistake, for fortune is fond of flouting such confidence. But at all events, whatever I may think with respect to domestic affairs, with respect to foreign affairs I will speak only of the present that I know; and with respect to the present I can say that there is not on the horizon a single speck of a cloud which contains within it anything injurious to the prospects of peace. In fact, it seems to me that the warfare of nations, if you are to judge by the interest they take in the subject, is slowly changing its subject and its field, and that it is the industrial competition which chiefly occupies in these days its chancelleries and diplomacies, and the great subject of consideration are those treaties of commerce which are to expire next year—the great question of what tariffs the various nations will adopt with

respect to each other. And though with respect to material warfare I think we can hold out to you the most promising anticipations as far as our present prospects go with respect to this industrial warfare, which has for its weapons protective legislation, and has for its prize the markets of various countries, I am afraid we must be content to occupy for a time a peculiar and isolated position. The recent elections in the United States have shown that the slight reaction against protection has spent its force. The one colony which we were able to cite as a free-trade colony, New South Wales, I am afraid no longer has an unspotted robe in that respect, and we shall have the advantage, I think, before very long of being the Athanasius *contra mundum* of free trade. But I have no doubt that the commercial community of this country does not falter in its attachment to free trade, and I do not ascribe to it any special virtue in that respect, because the fact that the articles with respect to which we should have to exercise protection, if we exercised it at all, are mainly articles of first consumption, bearing upon the necessities of the whole body of our population, is, to my belief, an absolute guarantee that we shall never return to the ways of protection. There is one department only of foreign affairs on which I think it necessary to say a word. There has been a change in this—not a change in our duty, but a change in this, that those who criticised the Government have, for the first time, entered upon statements of

policy and prophecies as to the future with respect to our position in Egypt. Without trespassing upon any party field, I venture to say that all such disquisitions are singularly unfortunate and inopportune. I am in a position to know their effect. I know that they have given heart to all who are unfriendly to England, and have given pain to all who value her prosperity. But in saying so I am compelled to admit that in my judgment persons abroad attach too much importance to the utterances to which I refer. They do not know the play of our electioneering system. They do not appreciate the emancipation from considerations of prudential patriotism which is conferred by a situation of lesser responsibility and greater freedom. But still I should like to say a word with reference to the policy of Her Majesty's Government on that subject, as it has been challenged. That policy is absolutely unchanged. We have no intention of retiring from the task that we have undertaken. We as a Government are not responsible for the situation in Egypt. We did not go there. When we came into office, we found matters in a state of considerable confusion, a confusion which the lapse of years has rectified; but we know that England before our time underwent great sacrifices, shed her most precious blood, and scattered treasure freely in order to rescue Egypt from the evils which had overtaken her; and if England acted alone in that matter it was not her fault. And now that the blood is spilled and the treasure

spent, and that great result is in course of being achieved, we cannot allow all that to be swept away as if it were last year's almanac, and suffer the country, which at so much cost we have rescued, to fall back into the condition of anarchy and confusion and danger to all its neighbours which it occupied a few years ago. Our object is not, as some have said, to sever the links which connect Egypt with the Ottoman Empire. Far from it. We desire to retain her in her present legal position, in that position in the Ottoman Empire which is defined by treaties and firmans, but we desire that within that legal position Egypt should be strong enough of herself to repel all external attack and to put down all internal disturbance. That position is not gained in a day. We are advancing towards it. We earnestly hope that we shall soon reach it, or reach it within a reasonable time. Perhaps, if we are assisted by others, we may reach it more quickly than we could otherwise do. Perhaps, if no obstruction is placed in our way, the goal will be more quickly attained, but until that end is achieved it must be the force of another Power that will keep Egypt from slipping back into the condition—a condition exposed to the attacks of barbarians without and of intriguers within—and that Power must be England. I have heard something said of international arrangements and self-denying engagements by which the same end could be reached. No paper guarantee is of any use—no international engagements will keep off the barbarians of the

Desert—no international engagements will shield the Government of Egypt from the innumerable difficulties which its peculiar position exposes it to in its interior administration. Egypt is under this peculiar condition, that it is fettered by many international rules which prevent the ordinary plan of Government and the ordinary administration of justice. They give an opportunity to those elements of disorder which, in a country where there are so many races, are constantly arising. No international engagements would prevent the eagerness of patriotic foreign representatives, or the restlessness of foreign colonists. These are dangers which constantly attend the government of Egypt, and a better habit and stronger institutions, and the tradition of a better political science, must form themselves in that country, and must gain stability and strike their roots in the soil before Egypt will be strong enough to maintain her own position against all these dangers. I entreat those who criticise us from abroad not to believe that this matter is one which will be disposed of by the vicissitudes to which party government is exposed. I have mentioned the meteorological prophecies. I know it is said we are a moribund Government. If that is the case, I have only, like Charles II., to apologise for being so long time dying. But I am not an entire believer in those prophecies, and I do not believe in that condemnation by a doctor, however distinguished a practitioner he may be, when he himself proposes to be the heir of the person whose doom he is certain of.

But these are matters of domestic interest, and we can fight out our domestic quarrels and bear our domestic vicissitudes, whatever they may be, as we have done in old times; but let not any persons deceive themselves into believing that they will in its main features and outlines modify the foreign policy of the people of this country. I am convinced that the people of this country take a deep interest in the solution of the problem we have undertaken in Egypt, that they are very proud of the splendid success which has accompanied the efforts of our administrators and our soldiers, and that whatever may happen, whether prophecies are fulfilled or not fulfilled, whatever party may be in power, the English people will never withdraw its hand from the steady and vigorous prosecution of the beneficent and humane undertaking with which it is now their pride and their honour to be connected."

On the 24th of the same month Lord Salisbury delivered a great speech at Birmingham, at the annual conference of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations. The Marquis said—

"There is a certain anomaly in all public speaking at this moment, that while every public speaker, and I think every audience, knows perfectly well that at the election which will close this Parliament a question of vital interest to the integrity of the Empire will for the moment be decided, yet there seems to be, at all events on the part of our opponents, an earnest desire

to turn away the attention of the public from that vital issue and direct it to many other matters of much more restricted interest.

“I see that it is thought by our opponents that measures upon these subjects are necessary in order to commend Home Rule to an unwilling constituency. We are told that Home Rule will only be accepted if it is sandwiched between this and that. I think the metaphor is hardly strong enough. You may have noticed that at the chemist’s they sell capsules made of gelatine, in which very nasty stuffs are enclosed. I believe you can take castor-oil without noticing that it is castor-oil if it is only put into one of those capsules. Now, Mr. Schnadhorst and his friends have recognised that Home Rule will not be swallowed by the English people except in one of these capsules, and therefore they do their best to enclose it in one. I cannot admit that it is our duty to ignore the gigantic importance of the issue that lies before us. At the same time, I am very anxious to disclaim that because this Irish question hangs before us and we are threatened with its agitation, that therefore we should abstain from English and Scotch legislation. On the contrary, there are many English and Scotch matters seriously requiring our attention, and to which we ought to devote all the time and energy in our power. I will not at this early period attempt—it would not be quite correct if I did—to forecast to you the contents of a Queen’s Speech which has not yet been written,

and which will not be written for a couple of months. But I think that we may very fairly consider some matters that have been raised by our opponents, and and if we do, I think we shall say that they do not in themselves contain anything which it is not fitting we should discuss, but that in most cases they do not go to the bottom of the sack, and that they do not deal with the matter in a sufficiently comprehensive fashion.

“One small matter—it is of small importance, and I will not dwell much upon it—is with respect to the question of rating. They raise the question as to whether others beside the occupier ought not to be included in the rate. Well, I have always entertained the opinion, and expressed it for many years, that our rating system was singularly ineffective and imperfect, and that we do not draw into the taxation, which is to do work in which the whole community is interested, we do not draw all kinds of property into that taxation. I should be very glad to see that anomaly corrected. I believe that the exclusive operation of the law of rating tends to discourage the building of small houses in towns and on the outskirts of towns, and that therefore it is a great evil, and is adding to the difficulties, which we already feel so much, of housing the more necessitous part of our population. The only thing you have to guard against is that this particular grievance, which is a real one, should not be made the occasion or opportunity for the gratification of some

particular class or political antipathy. If the question of all the interests of land being brought under the net of the rate collector is raised, well then I quite admit that, if you think it necessary to raise that question—it will be a very difficult and thorny one—that there is a great deal of logic on that side, but you must bring in the mortgagee and the debenture holder as well as the ground-rent owner, or else you will not do justice.

“Well, now, there is another much more important question. I see Mr. Morley—I am glad to recognise that there is always some solid thought at the bottom of his speeches—raised it as a great reproach against our party that we are not able to do anything to remedy the agricultural depression, and he reproaches us because we have no legislation to prevent thistle-down growing in Essex and Suffolk, where golden grain ought to grow. Mr. Morley is too exacting. Of course, if we had an unlimited license as to legislation, I have no doubt that we could correct that evil at once. That evil could be corrected by a measure which I should not recommend to you, and which you would not accept at my hands. But undoubtedly the fact that land which formerly grew corn in Essex and in Suffolk is now abandoned to thistle-down is due to nothing else than that you have withdrawn the protection under which that land formerly grew wheat. You have abundant compensation for that. Free trade has been a most admirable and in the main successful

policy. But you must take it with its disadvantages, and one of its disadvantages is that the less fertile districts in this country will no longer grow corn to profit. Nowhere in the world will you find any region that grows corn to profit without protection which is situated in the 52nd degree of latitude. That those countries were formerly great corn countries was due to the policy of Protection, with all its evils. That policy has been repealed. The improvement of rapid communication has brought free trade into its full exercise, and the result is, that the less fertile lands have been thrown out of cultivation, and where they are situated on the dry parts of the island, where grain crops cannot be profitably grown, necessarily a good deal is not cultivated at all. But it is absurd to imagine that you can correct that defect without abandoning the great policy to which you are all attached.

“Well, then, there is another matter that I observed was raised by the orators of Newcastle, and to which very great importance was attached. They called it ‘one man one vote.’ What they meant is that the representative system of this country should be overhauled again. That is a perfectly judicious policy to adopt at reasonable intervals. I don’t recommend that every Parliament should be occupied with that subject, or else they will be occupied with nothing else. Still, if any Parliament decides that the time has come for overhauling the representative system of this country, we quite admit there are a great many subjects deserv-

ing of its attention. One of the first subjects is the restoration of the populace, and, I may add, the Anglo-Saxon districts of this country, to their proper share in the representation. Ireland enjoys at the present time a dominating influence over our legislation which—I think I am not uncharitable—it does not seem to me to be required by any predominant superiority on her part in either patriotism or order or prosperity. I am told—I have not examined the figures myself, but I am told that thirteen seats, amounting to twenty-six on a division, would be taken from Ireland if she were dealt with on the principle of strict numerical equality, and that is the superiority which you give to her, for what merit I know not, in the councils of the country. Something of the same peculiarity is to be found in other portions of the country which are not the most advanced. The North of Scotland, the West of England, and Wales have all a representation considerably in excess of their population. It is natural it should be so, because as the world goes on they are either stationary or decreasing, and great towns of this country are increasing, and if you wish to overhaul the representation of this country, you will have to diminish the representation of Ireland and of certain of the edges of this island in favour of those great centres of population in which the intelligence and prosperity of this community reside. We have no objection to such a process. We have found that our arguments are

listened to with willing ears by the large centres of population. Our difficulties, if we have had any, have been in sparse and more ignorant districts, and we shall not be sorry for any reconsideration of the representation which shall give their proper weight to the large centres of population.

“As to parish councils. To district councils we have already expressed our adhesion, and when the time of Parliament permits we shall be very willing to carry our pledges out; but when you come to parish councils, I wish to know what they are to do. Parishes are a very strange, a very unequal division of the country. You will find parishes very small and parishes very large. They have no duties, as far as I know, to perform; and when I am told, ‘You ought to give them parish councils, in order to make rural life more interesting than it is,’ I really cannot admit that the object of representative institutions is to amuse the electors who send representatives to them. If among its many duties the modern State undertakes the duty of amusing the rural population, I should rather recommend a circus, or something of that kind. But I am quite certain if you attempt to amuse them by giving them parish councils, you will not satisfy the demand you have raised. As far as I have had the opportunity of attending vestries, I am bound to say that amusement is not the feature to be remarked upon as that which is most prominent, and our five years of office will leave beneficial traces upon the

statute book which will combine the suffrages of both sections of the Unionist party. But in taking, as I think we have a right to take, to the Conservative party their due share of praise, I am bound not to pass by the enormous merit which we must recognise in our Liberal Unionist allies. I will venture to say that you will search the records of this country, or of any other parliamentary country, in vain before you will find such an alliance; and I will venture to say that those qualities, which at first we might well have forecast with some apprehension, considering especially all the circumstances of the case, impose a duty upon us Conservatives that we are bound to do all we can to make the task of the Liberal Unionists easy to them. I earnestly appeal to any of those on whom my voice may have the faintest influence in this city to remember this great truth. Birmingham is the centre, the consecration of this alliance. It is in Birmingham we have received from those from whom on other subjects we may have been most divided the heartiest, the fullest, the most loyal support, and it is in Birmingham that our own Conservative adherents should, if we have any influence on their convictions and their actions, show most earnestly their desire to cement this alliance."

After referring to the general election, Lord Salisbury said—"If I read aright the political history of the last two years, I should say that it indicates that it is the great towns that are in our favour on the subject

of Home Rule, and that in rural districts it is not on the question of Home Rule, but on some question of allotments, or on some question of equal importance that they take an opposite view.

“I do not at all deny that the rural classes have got their claim on the consideration and attention of Parliament. On the contrary, there is a measure which has been already promised in her Majesty’s Speeches, of which I think a gentleman well known to you, Mr. Jesse Collings, was the original inspirer, but which has reached the position of a question on which Parliament ought to be called upon to take some action. We all of us feel the extreme importance, if it is possible, of riveting the yeoman to the soil. I may say with a greater freedom, that long before any of these controversies arose that was a view which I earnestly and frequently tried to inculcate. I believe the greatness of this country has risen from its yeomanry, and I deeply regret that that yeomanry tends to disappear; and therefore I think it is quite desirable that an experiment should be made, and if by any use of the public credit we are able to increase the number of small proprietors in this country, I shall think it to be an enormous gain, in the first instance to our country, and in the second instance to the Conservative party. But it is fair that I should say that this is a question of experiment, and that if it turns out that economical laws are opposed to this result, no efforts that the Legislature can make will

prevent those laws from operating against the object which we have in view. I do not imply proposals of an unjust character. Where you take a man's property you must pay for it, but with that safeguard I thoroughly believe that the more the peasantry of this country can be brought into connection with the land, the more safe your institutions are, and the more the fibre of the English people will be preserved.

"Well, I observe that a great man, Sir William Harcourt, derives great comfort from the fact that we often speculate on what will happen if he and his party should obtain a majority, and he thinks that is a sign that we despair of our coming destiny. It is not a sign in the least; but the orators on the Opposition side are so fond of telling us that the accession of a Gladstonian majority to office will be the signal of perfect peace and quietness, the solution of all problems and the attainment of all ideals, that we are compelled to notice this strange claim in order that we may point out what the real state of the case is. We do not believe in this period of repose, even if that event should happen, which is very improbable to my mind. If we win, we are perfectly certain that our opponents will not cease their importunity. If they win, they may be perfectly certain that we shall not go back from our convictions. Some persons have said that there is no Home Rule Bill. I think that is uncharitable. I believe that there are two Home Rule Bills. The one is shown to the associates

of Mr. Dillon, and the other is shown to the more moderate persons who exist on this side of the water. But when it comes, if ever it should come, to producing a Bill in the House of Commons, they cannot produce two Bills; they must produce one, and then one-half or some other fraction of their support will fall away from them; and therefore I don't believe, even in the improbable case of their obtaining a nominal majority, that they will be able to pass a Bill through the House of Commons. Well, beyond that I speak with a little nervousness, for I observe whenever I mention the House of Lords it disturbs Mr. Gladstone's admirable temper. But I think his menaces imply a little confusion of thought. Let us take it, merely for the sake of argument, that the House of Lords are all the evil things which Mr. Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt say of them. That would not alter their duty by a single hair's-breadth. I quite admit that the constitution of the House of Lords is a matter on which it is very legitimate to discuss, and on which there is a great deal to be said for the many different opinions; but, if I may be allowed a practical opinion, it is this—that as any modification of the structure of the House of Lords will certainly diminish the power of the House of Commons, it will not for the present take place. Mr. Gladstone's menaces are really hardly worthy of his great position, because menacing, when you have no power to carry out your menaces, is a contemptible

thing. I have no doubt that the House of Lords—I have no authority to speak for them—but, if I can judge of what they have done in the past, my opinion is that they will not resist the opinion of their countrymen clearly and definitely expressed on an issue specially submitted to them. When Mr. Gladstone appeals to the example of Lord Grey, I think he forgets the exact history of the case. When Mr. Gladstone is able to bring back from the constituencies a cry for any Home Rule Bill, asserted by the decisive majority of the electorate in favour of ‘the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill,’ I do not think he will have much trouble with the House of Lords. But until that time arrives the House of Lords will be right in requiring that the assent of the constituencies should be given to the definite provisions of which the Bill is composed. He talks of menacing the House of Lords. He can only do that, as has recently been pointed out by Mr. Chamberlain, who I do not think was born with any passionate attachment to the House of Lords—he cannot do that without a resolution, and you cannot have a resolution on limited liability.

“Well, you will ask me, Why do you attach such intense importance to this crisis that you are willing to rest upon it the peace of the community and to make it a subject of contest for many years? If we failed in the House of Lords, we still should fight to persuade the electorate of the mistake that they had committed, and to swing back the pendulum in favour

of the integrity of the Empire. By the nature of the case I cannot dwell much on this consideration; but remember that Great Britain is a Power which holds her vast supremacy in commerce and her great political pre-eminence by reason of the dominion which she exercises in many lands in various parts of the globe. On that supremacy and on that pre-eminence depend her wealth, her industry, the success of her manufactures, of her commercial speculations, and, if you come to the end, the wages of every working man. Cut off those great possessions, and England—unable to feed more than a third of her population—will be unable to maintain in any comfort, in anything but the direst misery, the vast multitudes who now inhabit her soil. And yet, if you once tell the world that you are so weak that by sheer agitation, by merely making the thing unpleasant, a dependency so closely connected with us as Ireland has been wrenched from you, do you not think that other populations in other parts of the globe will take a lesson from it, and will learn the feebleness of the master with whom they have to deal? It is one of the curses of this controversy that we cannot discuss as we would, in its full detail and to the bottom, this momentous consideration; but it is one that I commend to your minds as one that affects the interest of every man, in whatever position of life he may be—of every man who desires to keep this country and his fellow-men from the greatest national calamity that ever befell a great country.

“The history of Ireland during the present year may be described as a practical lecture on the merits of Home Rule. You have seen there is one part of their political government which they have had absolutely in their own hands, and that is the organisation of the Nationalist party. You may have observed that at Waterford, at Carlow, or at Cork, two principal elements have presented themselves prominent above all the rest. One is the influence of the blackthorns, the other is the influence of the priests. Nothing in modern history has been shown equal to the influence of Archbishops Croke and Walsh in the recent history of Ireland. The priests have managed the election in Cork. At Carlow a clergyman who had taken the opposite side to them was compelled to write to the newspapers that he felt that he was a very unenlightened person, and had no business to judge of such great issues, and they have shown that they are absolutely masters of the bulk of the electorate in Ireland. Now, in speaking of this I wish to guard myself carefully. We have been accused of raising controversial and polemical issues. Nothing is further from my intention. I desire to avoid every word and every syllable that could be hurtful to the religious convictions of any person. But ecclesiastical domination in secular affairs is not peculiar to any religious belief. It is the parasite which eats out the vitality of all. I may frankly admit that Established Churches, being under considerable control, are less liable to it than any other, and that is one of the great

arguments in favour of Church Establishments. But we had it in the Church of England in old times, in the times of Laud; you had it in the Church of Scotland again and again. I am afraid you have it even now amongst the communities of Wales; and wherever you have it it is marked by this: the most perfect organisation, the most absolute detachment from any of the feelings which influence the ordinary citizen, the most entire superiority to any allegiance to the Government or established order which prevail. Now, what will be the state of the 2,000,000 who are the loyal minority in Ireland, and especially of those who are in the North of Ireland, supposing you hand them over to that ecclesiastical government? Mr. Dillon only two days ago expressed with great felicity what would be the result of a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland, for he said, ‘already every police-constable and every district magistrate is trembling in his boots,’ and, I suppose, are trembling too all those persons whom the police-constables and the magistrates may have protected. That is the issue to which you have to look. Every department of the Executive Government in Ireland will be in the hands of the men who dictated the elections at Carlow and at Cork—and not only that. The wealth of Ireland is in the north; the wealth of Ireland is with the Protestants; the wealth of Ireland is in towns like Belfast; but the taxing power of Ireland will be with Munster and Connaught; the taxing power for the wealthiest part of Ireland will be

with the least progressive, the least thrifty, the least industrious, the least loyal to the British connection—and you may depend upon it their financial difficulties will be considerable. Mr. Gladstone tells us that they are to give back £3,000,000 a year which they now enjoy. Where will that £3,000,000 come from? I doubt if it is coming from anybody, but, if at all, it will come from the merchants and manufacturers of Belfast. Well, this is a serious prospect. Mr. Gladstone tells us that we have no reason to fear that there is a minority of 2,000,000, and ‘behind those 2,000,000 a minority one would think not wholly incapable of making some effort at self-defence.’ Now you will observe that self-defence can only have one meaning. If ever a Home Rule Bill passes, these words will be often quoted—they are an incitement to civil war. If they are to overbear the tyranny which is being prepared for them by Mr. Gladstone and Archbishop Walsh, it will be a terrible resort—it will be a revival of all those terrible religious wars from which Ireland has too much suffered—we shall interfere to prevent such oppression, we shall reconquer the country, and the long dreary roll of seven centuries will begin again. Under these circumstances it is idle to imagine that any repose will be obtained by passing a Home Rule Bill, and the idea that the question of Ireland will thus be banished from the House of Commons is a ridiculous chimera.

“Mr. Morley talks of the Irish spectre stalking down the House of Commons and taking the majority

by the throat. He may be quite certain that if he has his way the Irish spectre will be as lively as ever, only his garments will be orange and not green. Mr. Gladstone's last address to us was a demand that, if we did not recognise the justice of his claim, at least we should recognise that it was inevitable. With the greatest respect, I fling the adjective back in his face. The inevitable is on our side, not on his. The course of the world's destiny is with us, and not with him. We are moving with the stream, he is battling hopelessly against it. Wherever you look, you see in all political arrangements that, so far as geographical considerations permit, men tend to the consolidation of territory and the concentration of authority. Look at Spain, France, Germany, Italy. Even in the United States, young as it is, you see that State rights are giving way to Federal rights, and the central power is increasing every generation in its influence. This is the course of the world. This is the path which many nations have followed. Do you imagine that at the bidding of Mr. Gladstone only—do you imagine that by spreading subtle lures, by which the agricultural labourer can be hoodwinked and deceived—do you imagine that by contrivances such as that, the steady course of the earth, as designed by Providence, shall be turned back? We are certain it is not so. We believe that the election which is coming will decide in our favour. We do not stake our whole case on that. The same tenacity as our own opponents have exhibited—or even more—we

shall show in maintaining our cause, believing for certain that we pursue the road and seek a goal which we must infallibly attain; and strong in that faith we shall, under any circumstances, pursue what we believe to be the path of empire, the path of justice, and, as established by our own short experience, also the path of prosperity and peace."

On the following day, in reply to a toast which referred to the difficult task that the Ministry had assumed, Lord Salisbury said—"The sight that we see, looking at matters especially from the Foreign Office, is that of tariffs growing up on all sides of us, constantly in the nature of protective duties, limiting, and to the utmost of their ability stifling, our trade. We see that the heresy on which these efforts are founded does not diminish, but on the contrary grows. Like other evil passions, protection—the passion, the appetite for protection—grows with what is furnished for it to feed upon; and as we watch from week to week, we cannot but feel some anxiety lest, for a time at least, these efforts may be partially successful, and what we deem to be the errors of foreign statesmen may be translated into fact by the suffering of our commercial classes, and the something worse than suffering of the industrial labourers who depend upon them. Those things give us great anxiety, and furnish a claim to your sympathy and consideration, and generous interpretation higher even than is furnished by those more combative matters to which on other occasions I have

referred. And it does not stop there. It is not merely that our trade is being hindered, for the moment at least, by this foreign legislation; we have our own trouble in our own rural districts. The same cause to a great extent, and other analogous causes, have brought it about that throughout large territories in this country there is no longer the same employment for labour that there was. Yet there is fault in nobody; it is the action of economic laws; it is the action of communities, at all events, outside this country. But the result is the constant cessation of employment in the country and a constant drain of labourers to the towns. You talk lightly of grass and pasture being substituted for cultivation of arable land; but in every small farm where such an operation takes place it means that three or four families—less capable than any others of shifting for themselves, more dependent upon daily work than any others—are cast loose upon the world without employment, and have to seek such a desperate remedy as may be found by crowding still further the overcrowded towns. I need not say that we should seize with avidity any measures that promise legitimately and healthily to increase the employment either of the labourers in the towns or those unfortunate agricultural labourers from the country. But I think one of the acutest portions of our anxiety lies in this, that in their ignorance, and misled by men who though honest are mistaken, they cry for remedies which are no remedies at all, and which we know perfectly well

that if we help them to obtain would plunge them into far deeper misery than before. These are difficulties which, on the one hand, must claim your sympathy and assistance, and on the other are the justification for making such efforts as we safely and legitimately can make to lessen the evil. On the one side, we must avoid the dangerous apathy which attempts to cure the suffering of the people by simply ignoring it; on the other, we must shun that far more dangerous wandering into economic error which will plunge the whole country into irreparable disaster. Your chairman, in proposing this toast, alluded, as was right and necessary in the presence in which we stand, to the loyal, straightforward support which this Government has received from the Liberal Unionists. We are a Government of Conservatives with one brilliant exception—and I don't think he is the least Conservative of our body. But we have undoubtedly received a measure of unstinted support which is new to parliamentary history, and which, I think, augurs well for the action of parties in this country for the future. Because, gentlemen—lay this to heart—that with the crisis through which we are now passing it is not only the fate of Ireland that is being determined; there is also this great question brought to issue: What shall be the character and spirit of party government in this country, and how shall it be shaped for the future? It is liable to many and great errors if it is falsely used; and if its principles are strained to excess, if

common sense and common justice and honesty are not brought to bear to control its proceedings, it may be a dangerous instrument which will bring parliamentary government to the ground, and there is nothing that we ought to be more jealous of than that we should understand rightly and practise scrupulously the limitations under which the party cohesion may be obtained and party government carried on. Now we have had some very high doctrine recently maintained as to party loyalty. Sir William Harcourt has at all events had the courage, I won't say of his opinions, but of his acts ; and the acts which he has felt himself, for whatever reason, compelled to perform, he has at a later period felt himself compelled to construct scientific formulæ to defend. According to his view, a party is an army ; it has only one duty, and that is to obey its general ; and, if I understand him rightly, the obedience is to extend to the utmost limits, even to such a matter as reversing the uniform and hauling down the flag. A party properly disciplined and exercised, according to Sir William Harcourt's acceptation of the term, ought to have ' turn your coats ' as one of the evolutions of its daily drill. I am at all events prompt to recognise that Sir William Harcourt has rendered that allegiance to his party without stint or hesitation. When we remember how he taunted his adversaries about stewing in Parnellite juice, and with what speedy, lightning-like rapidity such an entire change in his opinions has taken place that he himself sought that fate for his

own enjoyment, we should recognise with what devotion he has accepted the doctrine that a party is an army that has no other duty but to obey its general. I often think that our painters miss some of the best historical pictures which they might compose—that there would be nothing more beautiful than a painting representing Mr. Gladstone leading down his embarrassed, enthusiastic, yet hesitating neophyte into a baptismal bath of Parnellite juice. It would remain throughout all ages as a testimony to the peculiar political merits of some statesmen in the present day, and would, at all events, sanction and record in the most striking colours the allegiance of what calls itself the Liberal party to its chief. Yet I should like to know what that Liberal party consists in. The Liberal statesmen of the reigns of Victoria and of William IV., whatever opinion you may form upon their legislation, have been great men, and have exercised an enormous influence on the destinies of their country. But the glory of the Liberal party has been that it has been led by such men; there is not a party that claims the allegiance of all who ever belonged to it, independently of the men who led it or the principles by which it is guided. What is the essence of this party to which Sir William Harcourt treats it as a species of deep moral culpability if you do not render an absolute obedience—wherein does the essence of it lie? It cannot lie in the men if they change; it cannot lie in the leader—for up to 1859 he was a member of the Carlton

Club. I have thought much, and I think we must recognise a species of apostolical succession residing in Mr. Schnadhorst, and that the first duty of every liberal-minded citizen is to obey Mr. Schnadhorst and all his successors to the end of time. Now, I hold it to be no small benefit conferred upon English politics by the Liberal Unionists that they have torn to shreds this false view of party allegiance. Party exists to enforce principles; principles do not exist to make the fortune of a party; and Liberal Unionists have seen, as I hope that men in every party, in our party if it arose, would also see, that conscience and principle stand first, and that when you are dealing with the deepest matters which concern the foundations of the Empire, you have no right to allow past tradition or personal friendship or previous prepossession to blind you to the convictions to which you have really given your adhesion. But there is a possibility of taking the exactly opposite view of party allegiance, which I also think is liable to lead us into error. It is our business to place big things above party, but I think it is our duty to place party above small things; and unless we do so, unless we will sacrifice matters of inferior importance, it is impossible to bring together men to defend the questions to which they attach supreme importance. There is amongst a certain class of men too great a tendency to take some little point, some little eccentricity it may be, or it may be something that is perfectly defensible but is not a burning

question of the moment, not a matter for which effort is required, and to say, 'We will unite for nobody for any practical purpose who does not agree with us to the smallest point on which we hold convictions.' That is a nobler error, I think, than that of Sir William Harcourt, but I think it is a very great error all the same. It is an error on which every political effort must be wrecked, and which makes it hopeless to use our system of party government for the defence of great interests and to the maintenance of the institutions of the country. And now I will only thank you again for your kindness in receiving the toast of 'Her Majesty's Government,' and conclude by the expression of my deep conviction that the action of the Liberal Unionists at this age has made a stamp which will not easily be effaced upon English history, and has taught politicians of this and of succeeding generations that there are some things on which for no consideration you can yield, but for which at any risk or hazard you must fight."

CHAPTER IX.

FROM ONE SURPRISE TO ANOTHER.

“A steady hand
To hold, a steadfast heart to trust withal.”

—JEAN INGELow.

“Give me the avowed, the erect, the manly foe !
Straight I may meet, perchance may turn his blow.
But of all plagues that Heaven in wrath may send,
Save ! save ! oh save me from a candid friend.”

—CANNING.

DISRAELI said—“In politics there’s nothing like a surprise.”

1891-1892.

THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF CLARENCE—SPEECH AT EXETER
—IRISH BILLS—ACCIDENT TO LORD SALISBURY—SPEECH AT
ULSTER—LORD SALISBURY ON THE EIGHT HOURS QUESTION
—HASTINGS—FREE TRADE STATEMENT—THE ULSTER CON-
VENTION—DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT—MANIFESTO.

THE year of grace 1892 opened under circumstances that required peculiar grace for even their patient endurance. A hard winter seemed likely to be followed by a cold spring ; trade was depressed, and there was much suffering and misery among the poor. Sanguine spirits, indeed, anticipated a speedy removal of the cloud ; and it was generally believed that the anticipated

royal wedding would revive trade again. But on the 14th of January the Duke of Clarence died, and, mingled with the profound national sympathy with the bereaved family, there was a consciousness that the gloom meant poverty and distress, perhaps death, to many tradesmen and those dependent upon them.

During this gloomy crisis Lord Salisbury visited Exeter, and addressed a mass meeting of Devonshire Conservatives in a building capable of holding at least 10,000 people. He was received by a fanfare of trumpets, and after a brief reference to the colleagues he had lost, said—

“It is our first duty as politicians to consider the welfare of all classes in this country, and most of all those whose condition leaves most to be desired. Those whose condition is most difficult, and who are subject to the greatest hardships, have the first claim upon our attention, and the more we attend to them and discuss and examine into the grievances under which they suffer, the better. And I earnestly invite discussion, and hope it may be protracted and exhausted, because I am grievously afraid of hasty, precipitate, ill-considered legislation in these matters, and it will be possible, I hope, for statesmen to do great good to the humblest classes in this country by the wisdom of the measures they propose; but I am certain it is possible for reckless agitators and men who are only thinking of the votes they can get to plunge us into a course that will not only not benefit, but will irre-

trievably injure the very class they desire to sustain. You were recently told, on very high authority, that the condition of the labouring classes in the country during the early part of the century was deplorable, and that very great improvement had taken place. I think that is certainly true, but what is not true is that the suffering in the early part of the century was due to any neglect or due to any indifference on the part of those who were then above them. The cause of the great rural misery in the early part of this century undoubtedly was the old poor-law, and there is great danger that in these days we may forget the bitter experiences which our fathers learnt, and return to all the fallacies and all the dangers from which they, and especially the Liberal party in those days, shook themselves free. The fault of the old poor-law was not indifference and hard-heartedness. It was the very reverse; it was altogether in the amount of its relief. I don't say that there is nothing in the new poor-law that should not be mended in that respect, or that we have attained absolute perfection, but at all events we have not got to that point which had been reached under the old poor-law, that sometimes the whole value of the parish was expended in the relief of the poor; that is to say, the rates amounted to twenty shillings in the pound. You will say, 'This was perhaps very lavish and very disagreeable for the owners of property, but at all events it was a great blessing to the poor.' But what was the actual

fact? The fact was that the relief given in this lavish manner was considered by the employers of labour as the wages that they offered, and the wages were driven down precisely in proportion to the relief given, or even in much greater proportion, and a poor man was left in this position—that he could not leave his parish, for he would have lost his relief; and the law put great difficulties in his way. If he stayed in his parish, he was obliged to be content with wages which were fatal to his comfort and health, and an absolute negative to any moral or intellectual progress. We have slowly, under the new poor-law—the Act of 1834—merged from that state of things. I do not say that that is the only cause. As you know, there are many causes that have been working together for the good of the people of this country, not the least among them the increase of trade and industry which has come from scientific discovery. But the new poor-law was the great agent in improvement, and it has taught us these two points, which seem to me to be lessons which we ought to lay to heart at the present crisis. Though it is a matter for which we ought never to cease to struggle, it is not a matter that we can hope to gain in a day by a single measure or by any royal road. It is a matter of slow growth and development. The evils which the old poor-law caused took two centuries to work out, and it has taken at least two generations before we have shaken ourselves free of the injury which it did.

“But there is another consideration which we must bear in mind: we must not be satisfied with the mere idea that the measure we propose is munificent and profuse; we must learn this rule, which is true alike of rich and of poor—that no man and no class of men ever rise to any permanent improvement in their condition of body or of mind except by relying upon their own personal efforts. The wealth with which the rich man is surrounded is constantly tempting him to forget the truth, and you see in family after family men degenerating from the position of their fathers because they lie sluggishly and enjoy what has been placed before them without appealing to their own exertions. The poor man, especially in these days, may have a similar temptation offered to him by legislation, but this same inexorable rule will work. The only true lasting benefit which the statesman can give to the poor man is so to shape matters that the greatest possible opportunity for the exercise of his own moral and intellectual qualities shall be offered to him by the law; and therefore it is that in my opinion nothing that we can do this year, and nothing that we did before, will equal in the benefit that it will confer upon the physical condition, and with the physical will follow the moral too, of the labouring classes in the rural districts, that measure for free education which we passed last year. It will have the effect of bringing education home to many a family which hitherto has not been able to enjoy it, and in that way, by developing

the faculties which nature has given to them, it will be a far surer and a far more valuable aid to extricate them from any of the sufferings or hardships to which they may be exposed than the most lavish gifts of mere sustenance that the State could offer. Well, but what are the remedies that are proposed for the undoubted drawbacks and evils in the position of the labouring classes of many parts?

“Well, the only one that appears to me to be received with any enthusiasm by our Radical friends is the institution of parish councils. It was first recommended as something that should add to the interest of village life. I don’t think that it is the duty of the Government to take care of the amusements of its citizens, and, if it were, there are no doubt other ways in which it could be done more effectually. I have attended meetings of all kinds, from the two Houses of Parliament to quarter-sessions, county councils, parish vestries, and so on, but I never had the opportunity of deriving any amusement from any one of them; and if I judged by my own life when I wanted amusement, I should not get myself on any assembly of that kind. But the effect of this multiplication of councils I do not think has been sufficiently noticed. What are you to appoint these new councils to do? Well, I am told they are to take care of the rates and the parish charities. That is a very fine thing, but the law gives the power to do that to every individual. If any individual thinks that the community is wronged on the

subject of rates he can go to the law courts, and any individual who thinks that the charities are not properly administered can go to the Court of Equity. Well, but then you will say, 'Oh, no; that is so expensive for me, and you ought to have a parish council to do it for me.' Well, but that means that our parish council is to be in the main a litigating body; it is to be a body that is constantly going to law. Most of the charities and most of the rates, we know, are pretty well ascertained by this time, and if your parish council raises these questions, it can only be in the shape of a lawsuit. Well, a lawsuit, as those who have had the pleasure of trying one know very well, is a very expensive amusement. Parish councils, for the purpose of going to law, will be parish councils for the purpose of raising the rates. If you create a political machine which has not got sufficient work to do, depend upon it, it will create work for itself to do. The first thing it can and will do will be to appoint a secretary, and the secretary will be a gentleman learned in the law, and very soon you will find that at the end of all this machinery of councils there is nothing but a considerable bill added to the rates without the provision for any more effective remedy than that which for centuries has worked pretty well. Now don't let me exaggerate the matter. I do not in the least say that parish councils will do any particular harm beyond this matter, which is a very disagreeable one, of raising the rates to a very unnecessary amount. A deliberative

body must increase the expense. I am myself responsible for having assisted in the creation of county councils, and probably, if I have the opportunity, I shall be responsible for assisting in creating district councils, but I am quite sure that in both cases I shall be responsible for a very considerable addition to the rates. That, it seems to me, is a very imperfect and unsatisfactory mode of remedying the hardship of which our labour friends complain.

“Now a much more hopeful proposal is the one which has been suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, the proposal to create a large insurance fund by which in old age men may benefit by the savings of their youth. I have no doubt not only that the object of this is beneficent, but that the principle of it is sound, if only it can be done; but in order to be effective it must be done on sound business principles, and we have not yet gone sufficiently into detail to know whether this can be effected. If it can be done without imposing any serious burden on the rest of the community, it will not only be a great benefit, but it will succeed precisely in proportion as it observes the rules at which I have already glanced—it must be something which facilitates thrift. So long as it facilitates thrift it will confer unmixed benefit, but when it goes beyond that line and consists of presents of public money, it will run great risk of the injury which always attends legislation of that kind, and I fear that its principal object may be frustrated by any such presents. It is fair to

remember that the poorer classes themselves have made the very greatest efforts to provide themselves with insurance societies for these various purposes. The friendly societies of this country, some of them, are very powerful and successful, but there are a number that have grown up and failed in every country district, testifying at once to the great desire, the great reality of the desire, and the value which the poorer classes attach to it, and to the extreme difficulties which we have to meet in avoiding risks which in such organisations might appear. It is a very sound exercise of the powers of the Government to do anything of good, if it can, without interfering with existing institutions that work well; if it can put within the reach of the poor the power of making effective provision for the days of darkness, the days of helplessness and old age, and keep themselves from the possibility of having to apply to the workhouse for relief.

“ Well, then, there is another remedy which has been a great deal talked of, but which I think is misapprehended; I refer to the question of small holdings. I am very anxious to multiply small landowners, small property holders in this country. I see that our opponents say this is one of the ideas we have stolen from them. They are very fond of that assertion, but the truth of it is not always in proportion to the vehemence with which they assert it—and in this case I beg to repudiate it most emphatically. As far back as

in 1870, what we called the Bright clauses were added to the Irish Land Act of that year, and anybody who cares to refer to the debates of that period will find that I expressed my desire to promote that policy, and my belief in the advantage which it would confer upon the country. I do not know that it will operate—at least not to a very great extent—in relieving the particular suffering of which the poorer classes complain; on the contrary, it presupposes a certain amount of money for a man to undertake a small holding. It would not be large, but it must be something. The advantage which I believe it will confer is of a wholly different kind. It is a political advantage. I do not think that small holdings are the most economical way of cultivating the land, but there are things that are more important than economy. I believe that a small proprietary constitutes the strongest bulwark against revolutionary change, and the soundest support for Conservative feeling and institutions. This is no mere theory. It has been tried under the most exacting circumstances in that land of France which has been racked and racked again by the paroxysm of revolution. The administrative machine has been held together; law has been supported, and on the whole society has been able, in spite of revolutions, to go on, because society was founded on this broad basis of what Lord Beaconsfield well called the territorial democracy. How far it will be possible for us to do it in this country is a much more serious question. There

is no doubt that there has been a constant tendency of the owners of small properties, where they exist, to sell them and to invest the money in a more lucrative concern ; and until we try I do not know whether any action of the State will be able to create a peasant proprietary on a large scale, but it seems to me very desirable that the experiment should be tried, that it should be seen that, so far as Government and so far as the other classes of society are concerned, we earnestly desire that the yeoman and the labourer shall remain upon the land, and shall contribute their strength to the strength of the institutions of the country. There is no difficulty about the experiment. There is plenty of land to be had. I am strongly against compulsion, at all events at this stage of the proceedings, because I do not believe it to be needed, and because I am sure that compulsion will create ill-will, will create litigation, and litigation will create rates, which is the evil to which all other rural evils tend to converge. But if we should succeed now in this country, you must not imagine that it will make no difference in the position of landowners.

“Now it is rather the fashion to look upon landowners as a semi-criminal class—upon whom it is quite reasonable to heap every burden you like in the shape of rates ; but when we have got the reliance of these sturdy yeomen whom we may hope to create, we shall expect to be treated in a very different tone ; we shall be quite certain then that this question of rates

will be thoroughly overhauled. There is no such crying injustice in this country as the system which places upon the owners of land and houses the support of the poor and of School Boards for the education of the poor. These are matters to which all the wealth of the country ought equally to contribute. There is no reason whatever why the holders of £750,000,000 of Consols should go absolutely free, and leave to their poorer neighbours who occupy their own lands or houses the duty of maintaining the poor and providing education. I know that this question is full of difficulty. I know that it has baffled statesman after statesman; but I have a strong belief that there is not sufficient moving force behind, and that if I had the number of yeomen I should like to create in this country, we should very soon see the system of rates put upon an equitable footing."

After an allusion to the bye-elections, Lord Salisbury thus referred to the Home Rule question:—

"We are deeply convinced that the matter of the union of Ireland with England concerns the deepest interests of our country, and we would hold ourselves unworthy of the position to which we have attained, and the cause that we have undertaken, if we should not continue by all legitimate means in our power the contest to the end, before we would admit that it had failed.

"Now, Lord Morley has called your attention to the very uncertain character of the question we have

to deal with. My belief is that the present Radical party has not distinctly made up its mind what it will do upon this Irish question, but I think that many of its supporters in English constituencies have propagated the idea, and that some constituencies have believed them, that it is the intention of the future Radical Government to give the Irish members the slip; to get into office by their help, but not really to propose any measure for separation between Ireland and England. I think that that idea extensively prevails, and I think it accounts for some of the lukewarmness which has been shown in respect to the idea of the Union. Whether it is true or not I do not know, and it does not seem to me to be a matter of the faintest importance, for I am quite sure that whether they intend to conform to the views of the Irish members or not, in the long-run, if they give way by instituting a separate Parliament, separation to the utmost point will follow, until we have reached what O'Connell called, and what Mr. Gladstone accepted, the condition of connection by only the golden link of the Crown. The separation will be carried out to its utmost point, and I say so for these three reasons. In the first place, it has an air of patriotism about it to shake off the authority of England and to assert the independence of Ireland to the utmost point; in the second, I observe, as you may have observed, that however much the Irish patriots quarrel among themselves, none of them will admit that he is going to

accept less terms from England than another. Each of them try to persuade the Irish that they are resolved to obtain the utmost separatist terms from Mr. Gladstone, and therefore when the time comes that circumstance indicates in what way their efforts will go, and that both of them will be forced to turn against the Radical Government unless the pledges which have been given by them are fulfilled to the utmost. And what will the Radical Government do? The timidity which has yielded so far will yield further still. The first step will have been taken; they will have consented to practical separation in all ordinary affairs of government, and to ask them to surrender the few petty securities, whatever they are, for the sake of the blessing their English supporters may only in the first instance advocate, will seem not an excessive demand. It certainly will be no demand that they will have courage enough or determination enough to resist. You may take it therefore for certain that separation we shall come to at last if we move the least along this dangerous road.

“What I want you to consider is the position in which such an event, if it takes place, will leave England in the eyes of Europe and of the world. And they will know, and the world will know very well, what the circumstances of the case have been, and they will not be misled by any sentimental observations about the union of hearts. They will know that Ireland has forced England to give what will

then be given. And what will it be? England is the free trade country of the world. You will be setting up within a mile and a half of her shores an ultra-protectionist Ireland, who will be protected by England in the adoption of these theories. England is the Protestant State of the world. England has resisted more than any other country the domination of the clerical profession—however deeply honouring it in the exercise of its legitimate functions—it has resisted the secular domination of the clerical profession. You are going to create an ultra-clerical State under the government of Archbishops Croke and Walsh; you are going to give power to the majority in that State, and therefore power to the State, to those who through long ages have always been the enemies of English influence and English power. They fought against us when we quarrelled with Spain, they fought against us when we quarrelled with America, and they fought against us when we quarrelled with France—in each case they took the side of Spain or America or France; and to this majority you are going to submit, to place under their heels a rich, progressive, and enlightened minority, who are in deep sympathy with ourselves. You are going to give to this majority, which contains all that is backward, all that is unprogressive, all that is contrary to civilisation and enlightenment in Ireland, to give to it power over all that is enlightened, civilised, and progressive, and you start this State well knowing

that under the conditions under which it must go forth it will be utterly impecunious. The exchequer of the future Irish—I was going to say Irish republic, but I suppose I must call it Irish province—will be needy from the first, and new burdens will be imposed, and when the question comes as to which shall bear them, the majority will remember that the minority are rich, and Belfast and Londonderry, and all the old and flourishing and wealthy districts that surround them, will have to bear the chief part of the burden in enabling this ultra-protectionist, ultra-clerical, uncivilised community to float. What conclusion would they draw—what conclusion would you draw—if you saw Italy so forced to give up Sicily under similar terms, Germany forced to give up Hanover, or France forced to give up Brittany? You would say at once, ‘This State is either so weak that we must conclude the period of its vigour has passed by, and the time of its senility has set in, or this State is so torn by thoughtless faction that men are willing to sacrifice the integrity of their empire and of the principles in which they most believed, and the classes who have borne everything for them, and to whom they are most attached, in order that they may get a few more votes for their party.’ Do you think this will be without effect upon your power and standing in the world? What has given to this little island its commanding position? Why is it that fleets of ships from every nation come into our ports with the products

of their countries? Why is it your industries and manufactures are carried to the farthest quarters of the globe? What is it gives you this high and privileged position? It is that your flag floats over a population far more numerous and regions far vaster than your own, and upon the dominions of your sovereign the sun never sets. But when they see that under the pressure of Irish disaffection you have lost the nerve, or the fibre, or the manliness to uphold the dignity of your own dominion, will they not apply that lesson to themselves, and many of them say, 'Now is the time for us to shake off this connection and stand alone and independent in the world.' Remember there are vast regions, vast populations over which you rule; and though it cannot be said you rule by fire, because your rule is mild and gentle, you would not rule if your force was not believed in. I cannot conceal the deep apprehension with which I look to any failing or flinching on the part of those people during the 'trial which destiny has appointed to them. We are now on what may be the turning-point of the way. We are now at the point where, if we show qualities by which our ancestors attained this empire, we may be thought worthy to retain it and hand it on; but if we are deceived, or allow ourselves to be deceived, by hollow sentimental follies, which are in reality only an excuse for weakness and want of courage—if we allow ourselves to be deceived by them, the day of our power will be set, and slowly we shall recede

from the great position handed down to us. If you fail in this trial, one by one the flowers will be plucked from your diadem of empire—one by one you will be reduced to the resources of this small over-peopled island. I do not say that it is the next election. I have told you that I consider the conflict will last much longer than that; but to the conflict which now impends the eyes of every patriotic man who loves his country ought to be directed. I appeal to you, and to all members of this great community at this critical hour of our fate, not to be untrue to the great traditions, to the splendid position which our fathers have handed down, to make every effort and to set aside every secondary issue or cause of conflict, in order that we may avoid, before it be too late, this crowning calamity and disgrace.”

Parliament did not meet until the 9th of February. Nine days after the commencement of the session, Mr. Balfour introduced a Bill which proposed a modified scheme of Home Rule for Ireland. It was carried by a majority at the second reading, but, principally on account of the apathy of the Irish as well as of the Conservative party, it was sacrificed before the close of the session. A still more important Bill was brought forward on the 22nd of the same month—a compulsory Bill extending to Ireland the educational benefits enjoyed by England and Scotland. The Government proposed that all children between the ages of six and fourteen should be compelled to attend school;

that some of the said schools should be free, and that towards the expense thus incurred a subsidy of £200,000 per year should be granted from the Imperial Exchequer.

On the afternoon of the 1st of May an alarming accident occurred to Lord Salisbury. About half-past three o'clock his Lordship was being driven, as usual, in a pair-horse brougham along St. James's Street towards the Foreign Office, when one of the horses commenced kicking, and got a leg over the traces. Its plunging startled the other horse, and before any help could be rendered, the brougham had come into collision with the refuge in the centre of St. James's Street, and turned on its side. The coachman, Edward Thomas, in trying to jump from his seat, got under the box, so that for a moment the scene was one of great excitement, intensified by the high-mettled horses kicking vigorously at the carriage. Help was promptly at hand, and while some persons held the animals' heads, others assisted the coachman from under the brougham. It was not known who was inside until a bystander climbed on to the upturned side and opened the door. Then Lord Salisbury was helped out to the footpath, and it was seen that he was uninjured. His Lordship, in answer to inquiries, said, that though a little shaken, he was not hurt. He asked that assistance should be rendered to the coachman, and having seen that done, walked to the Foreign Office, the only trace of the occurrence he bore being a crushed hat. The coach-

man was much shaken, and he sustained a cut on the forehead and a bruise on the shoulder, his clothing also being much torn. The brougham was much damaged.

On the 6th of May, Lord Salisbury delivered a remarkable speech at the annual festival of the Grand Habitation of the Primrose League, which was held at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London. As this speech excited great public interest, and, taken in connection with the Ulster Convention, had a great influence upon the general election, a lengthy extract is desirable.

The vast auditorium was densely packed, and the body of the stage, which served as a platform, was tastefully decorated with flowering plants, while from the flies hung suspended the banners of the principal branches of the League.

The Marquis of Salisbury, Grand Master of the League, who, on rising to address the meeting, was received with loud cheers, said—"My lords, ladies and gentlemen,—I have, in the first place, to congratulate you heartily upon the progress of this League. We have met year after year, and it has always been to record a new advance in the power of the League and the influence of its principles upon the country; but we must remember that the principles of the League, and the matters for which it exists, though they are of supreme importance, and though the future of England is wrapped up in them, may be for a time obscured and put out of sight by inferior though exciting and tem-

porary conflicts. Sir Algernon Borthwick has alluded to the fact that a great challenge is sooner or later impending, at which great decisions must be taken by the people of this country. If the people know and realise the real great issues on which they are voting, there can be no doubt whatever as to the result. I have not seen the slightest indication to lead me to believe that in those great principles on which our Constitution and Empire are founded—those principles which this League exists to proclaim—those principles on which the dissolution of '86 took place—the slightest change has taken place in the deliberate opinion of the people of this country. But the very fact that our resistance in that fateful year has been up to this point so successful, that the prophecies which we made have been fully carried out, and that the policy which we put before the country has been so sustained and has issued in such brilliant results, lead people to treat the great controversies of the year as matters which are obsolete and unimportant; and to rivet their attention upon secondary issues with which the fate of our Empire is in no way concerned, though they affect differences between various classes in this country at the time. I am not going to minimise the importance of these differences. I am not going, in the slightest degree, to recede from the opinions which we have always expressed on the subjects that have occupied the public attention recently to so great an extent. But these are not the main points—the

main matters for which the Primrose League exists. It exists for empire and for liberty. It exists to sustain the great institutions which have been handed down to us ; to maintain undiminished, and to push forward in a career of unslackened prosperity, the great Empire by which these institutions have been produced.

“There is no doubt that the danger of the present moment is that the importance of these issues shall not be recognised. Men are concerned in matters which affect their daily life, and they have lost sight of the more important and permanent questions which it was the duty of this League to bring before them ; and the misfortune is that under our existing practical arrangement we have no means of separating the temporary from the permanent, or of ascertaining the opinion of the people of this country on the grave issues that are submitted to them. You know that we are dealing with a great proposal for organic change—a proposal which, in our belief, will rend this United Kingdom in sunder ; which will place a hostile Ireland on our flank ; which will subject to infinite damage and lead to disgraceful abandonment those who in Ireland have ever fought for our cause. These are issues which concern the future of the Empire and its present honour. The conflicts between classes which have lamentably arisen—and which, I think, have arisen largely because sufficient discussion has not yet taken place upon the economical laws which they involve—divisions between classes which

we would earnestly appease—these divisions are shutting out the great issue, the integrity of the Empire. You know that in other countries if a great organic change is proposed, there are always some means of ascertaining whether the nation is willing that that fundamental alteration should take place in its constitution. In America, in Switzerland—which are, assuredly, neither of them behind-hand in the cause of popular government—in both these countries no fundamental change can take place in the Constitution of the country without the people being directly asked whether they will have it be so or not. It is not so with us. We go to an election on several issues mixed up. Some people will vote on Disestablishment, some people will vote on the Eight Hours Bill, some people will vote on the integrity of the Empire, and we have no means of distinguishing between their verdicts or knowing which of the three subjects their opinions are to affect. It is often said that we are appealing to the verdict of the country; but just conceive what a state of things it would be if the metaphor were literally fulfilled. Can you imagine three trials taking place at once before the same jury—let us say a trial for murder, a trial for libel, and a trial of a patent case—and that the jury were only allowed to say yes or no in one verdict, and that that verdict was to affect all three cases. That is exactly the process by which the verdict is to be pronounced upon the organic institutions of this country. I do not say

it will be a final verdict. I have been very much taken to task because I have indicated there are other parts of the constitution of the country which may possibly, in certain contingencies, be called into action. But though I hope and believe that any such possibility is far distant from us, I think this strange anomalous condition of things, by which we cannot ask a plain question of those who have to decide our destinies, thoroughly justifies those precautions which the Constitution has happily taken against hasty or subversive decisions.

“I forget whether it was in this opera-house or the other, but six years ago, before the last dissolution, and when we were in opposition, I remember our meeting together and discussing the problem that was before us. We were then, I think, pretty well agreed that two things were necessary for the pacification of Ireland. One was the generous and enlightened consideration of her material wants, giving those openings to industry which might restore prosperity to the stricken portion of her population. The other was a firm, impartial, continuous administration of the law, so that industrious men might know that their industry would be protected, and that they might safely invest their labour and their money in the works of peace. Now after six years we come back to you and ask whether our promises have not been fulfilled. The measures that have been taken for opening up and delivering the distressed districts of Ireland are,

with the consent of all, broad, liberal, and effective. The administration of the law has been so impartial, has been so steady, that gradually, month after month, and year after year, the spirit of disorder has cowered before the spirit of law, and peace now so restored to Ireland that the crime of boycotting simply does not exist. Now these measures have had this inconvenience, as I have already indicated to you, that they have so completely effected their object that their object has ceased to be important. When we speak to public meetings about Ireland, they are rather inclined to wonder why we worry them about a matter which is no longer a matter of practical concern. The work has been done, and they think that no further precautions are necessary. Unfortunately, we know that there are men who are resolved to undo this work, and place the spirit of lawlessness above the spirit of law. We have, undoubtedly, on that account a serious battle to fight, and the exhortations that Sir Algernon Borthwick addressed to every member of the Primrose League were very opportune, and deserve the deepest attention. It is our business, each in his own sphere, to bring before those who have votes the vital questions that are at issue, to warn them that the question of the integrity of the Empire has not gone, and that they cannot afford to subordinate it to any more temporary and less important consideration. If you can effect that object, and draw their minds away from that which is passing to that which is permanent,

your victory is assured, and I think we have every ground to hope that you will succeed in doing so.

“The state of opinion with which we have to deal has in many respects considerably improved since we approached the question six years ago. Mr. Parnell—on whom, now that he has gone from us, I wish to pass no criticism—was undoubtedly a much more formidable opponent than any man he has left behind him. He had the power of bringing the American element into the agitation—the American element, with all its wealth of individual energy and of financial assistance; and now that he is removed, it seems to have fallen back into the old groove, and to resemble very much the conflicts between a portion of the people of Ireland and the people of England, which unhappily have existed for many generations past. It is of advantage that this formidable disturbing element has been removed. On the other hand, we see that in Ireland itself the opinion of loyalists is unabated and unchanged. The members of those Protestant Churches which do not belong to the old Established Church take, more keenly than they ever did before, the view that their own position as individuals will be terribly and dangerously affected if this measure should be passed into law, and all the hopes that are held out to them by their brethren in England, that the result of bringing back the present Opposition to power will lead to the disestablishment of English Churches, are not sufficient to reconcile

them to a change that will be a change from a condition of security and peace to a condition of present danger and peril. Well, then, has Ulster changed? Has that colony from this island, which has for two centuries maintained the cause of British unity—has that colony changed in its view or relaxed in its dread of the revolution that is threatened? On the contrary, the conviction of its danger appears to increase with every year, and I know nothing more unfortunate, no symptom more menacing, than the opinions which have lately been put forward by Ulster leaders, apparently with deep sincerity and a full conviction of the responsibility which they involve.

“The conditions with which Ulster has to struggle, and will have to struggle, if this change should take place, appear more clearly every day. Mr. Morley asks what have they to dread, and whether they dread the thumbscrew and the rack? They dread being put under the feet of their hereditary and irreconcilable enemies. I have been accused, because I have used this language, of attacking the Roman Catholic religion. Nothing is further from my intention, and I never used a word which could fairly be twisted to that sense. I utterly decline to recognise the inhabitants of the south-eastern portion of Ireland as typical members of the Roman Catholic Church; and I am the more justified in saying so because we know that the head of the Roman Catholic Church—though, of course, observing in a strictly political matter the

utmost impartiality—has strongly condemned the immoral agencies by which agitation in Ireland has striven to succeed. I can hardly mention this subject without, in passing, expressing the gratitude which we all must feel to that eminent authority, that the great position of influence which was occupied by the late Cardinal Manning is now conferred upon a man so deeply respected by all who know him, of whatever creed or shade of opinion, as Archbishop Vaughan. I have condemned, and always will condemn, those who, holding high spiritual authority—are at the head of a great spiritual organisation—shall use those weapons for purely secular objects in which no spiritual concern exists. I would condemn them, whether they were Protestant or Catholic, Anglican or Calvinist, Mahomedan or Jew. Men who do that inflict a dangerous wound upon civil society, and fasten a profound stain upon the spiritual weapons which they use. But we are told that there is really nothing to dread. What the Ulster people have to dread is to be placed under the despotism of their foes. Is there a worse fate to be given to any man? Of course, if you choose to think that the despot under whose heel your neck will be placed is a man invested with every virtue of mildness and forbearance, you may believe that such a situation, though humiliating, will not be otherwise disagreeable; but if the despot under whose foot your neck is placed represents an here-

ditary enemy, not merely from religion—for I do not hold religion to be the greatest factor in the matter—but when to this important factor in the events of a lamentable history is added the existence of the bitterest feelings of hostility, there is no cruelty equal to that which you can inflict upon a community by placing it under the absolute power of another community situated under those conditions and animated by those feelings.

“Remember that everything the Ulsterman holds dear will be in the hands of Dr. Walsh and his political friends—everything. All the wealth which they produce, all their commerce, all their flourishing agriculture, all the circumstances which distinguish them from the rest of Ireland, will be at the mercy of the majority, over whom no check will exist. Is that not a terrible fate to which to condemn any man? Is that not a terrible reward for the fidelity to the British connection which these men above all have shown? How would you in this city of Westminster—how would you like it, if you could imagine such a thing, if you were placed entirely under the control of men who for several generations had been the bitterest opponents of your forefathers—of men who were separated from you by every consideration of race, creed, and country? If the power of every officer, and of every judge, and of every policeman, and every agent upon whom you attach the government of the country was in their hands, would you not consider it wrong to be taken from a position of safety and be placed

entirely at the mercy of their discretion? We know that this is not merely speculative matter. The Ulster people know the fight which is in store for them, and they have made up their minds to meet it. I have heard many bitter and severe things said of them because they do not show an unlimited submission to the possible determinations of some future Parliament on this subject. I have been very much edified by the doctrines of passive obedience which have flowed so liberally from orthodox Liberal members. I am a Tory, but yet I cannot accept in all their entirety these doctrines of unrestricted passive obedience. I believe that the title both of kings and of Parliament to the obedience of their subjects is, that those kings and those Parliaments should observe the fundamental laws and the fundamental understanding of the compact by which they rule. Parliament has a right to govern the people and laws. It has not the right to sell them into slavery. And I do not believe in the unlimited, unrestricted power of Parliaments any more than I do in the unrestricted power of kings. Parliament, like kings, may take a course which, while it is technically within the legal limits of its attribution, is yet entirely at variance and in conflict with the understanding of the Constitution by which they rule. James II. forgot that law. He stepped outside his power—he stepped outside the limits of the spirit of the Constitution; and we know how the people of Ulster met him.

“If a similar abuse of power—be it on the part of

a Parliament or on the part of a king—should ever occur at any future time, I do not believe that the people of Ulster have lost their sturdy love of freedom, or their detestation of arbitrary power. But these things are outside the technical considerations which usually decide whether resistance is likely to succeed. They are usually decided by the consideration whether resistance is likely to succeed, and that is a consideration which has its interest for us all. Whether the Ulster men choose to pit themselves against the rest of Ireland—whether, if they do so, they will succeed, is a matter for their consideration; but I cannot help seeing, in the language of those who herald this approaching change, the belief that the military force of England will be employed to subject the people of Ulster to Dr. Walsh and his political friends. Political prophecy is always uncertain; but I think I may venture to prophesy that any attempt on the part of any Government to perpetrate such an outrage as this would rend society in two. But these are speculations. What a terrible picture the fact that we have to enter into these questions at all! What a terrible picture that unfolds before us! What a terrible division in an Empire which has hitherto presented a united front to the world! You call it a message of peace to Ireland. It is a message of religious civil war, and we must look at our share in the matter, and see how far we are responsible for that civil war being brought about. Mr. Morley tells us that he laughs at

the idea that the British elector will be affected by such fears. He may be right. It will depend very much upon the exertion of the Primrose League, and all who think with it; but I am quite sure that unless you exert yourselves to prevent this hideous picture becoming a reality, unless you prevent his sinister prophecies from becoming true, you will bring about a result which will not secure Home Rule to Ireland. Many, many years of conflict would have to pass before that could be the case; but you would bring about a state of things which would destroy the credit and enfeeble the power of England in every quarter of the world."

On the 11th of the same month a deputation from the London Trades Council waited upon Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office, in order to impress upon him the desirability of securing as speedily as possible a lessening of the hours of labour.

Lord Salisbury said: "The object you have is one which, speaking roughly, is desired not only by the working men, but by the community at large. There is a general sympathy with your desire to shorten the hours of labour, and it is natural that it should be so. The two objects stated by certain of you who have spoken to be desired through the shortening of the hours of labour are both admirable, and one is likely to be more easily attained than the other. One object was that you desired more time for self-culture and self-improvement. All classes of the com-

munity will sympathise with you in your desire for the attainment of that object; and I think we must look forward to the time when the advance of society, and the progress of a better feeling between employer and employed, will enable the opportunity to be more and more enjoyed. I do not think that you were equally unanimous with respect to the employment of the unemployed. Everybody sympathises with those who are out of employment; but that the shortening of the hours of labour will bring about the employment of those who are out of work will not, I think, be found correct. But, broadly speaking, after making all allowances for different trades and particular cases, there is a general belief that in many cases the hours of labour are too great, and it is very desirable that where that is the case they should be reduced. The question is as to the method of bringing this reduction of hours about. You have said that the action of strikes is clearly applicable, but that it involves too much loss and injury to the working-men to be commonly resorted to. I am not in a position to deny that, but I feel that such action cannot possibly avoid doing injury. There is, however, another method of obtaining what you all desire, and that is by the slow, the sure, and the irrevocable movement of public opinion in that direction. I believe that there is a steady movement of opinion in favour of such a change where the circumstances render it possible for that change to be brought about,

and nobody will doubt that in such a case it is far better to effect the change in that way than by the violence of strikes or the violence of legislation. I am very glad to have the opportunity of hearing your views, but I hope in giving you this interview I did not give any impression that I was converted to your views, because that is not the case. My belief is, that the question requires a great deal of discussion, and I have no doubt that we politicians—I noticed that word used by several with a sort of contempt—know more about the work of government, and not as much of the details and hours of labour as you do. You too, I think, are not so well acquainted with the work of politicians as we are. It will, I think, be necessary for a great exchange of facts to take place before we can come to the conclusion that it is the common wish of the common conscience that the shortening of the hours of labour would be beneficial. I am an utter unbeliever that anything which is violent will have permanent results. On the other hand, I want to suggest for your consideration two or three of the difficulties which will attach to the course which you desire should be adopted. Now, in the first instance, throughout the speeches I have heard, the tone has always been, action by strike is difficult, rough, dangerous, and disadvantageous, while action by legislation would be easy and prompt. Of course it is true, if employers desired that the thing should be done, it would come about easily; but if you go to legislate

for that which the employers do not desire, they will resist it to the utmost of their power, and in that resistance they will have the assistance of the minority of your class, and you would therefore fail to get your Bill. But supposing you make it as you propose, you will have, in the first place, to recognise the fact that your particular class, powerful as it is, is not master in all parts of the country, and therefore you will only have a portion of the elected in your favour. And supposing you obtain a majority, if the legislation is to operate against the strong and powerful classes, it is almost certain to produce something totally different from that which is desired. There is a constant struggle of two forces against each other, and if two forces meet at an angle, they do not move in the line on which either of them started, but they produce some compromise between the two, and a result which neither had in view when they started. You are trying a tremendous experiment—one which has never been tried before. You are risking the interests of the whole community, and you must think very carefully before you exercise the great power which you have upon matters which you and your children might have reason to regret. Then there is another consideration. I think two or three of the speakers—although they did not absolutely say it—seemed to think that with the reduction of the hours of labour to eight they would get as much wages as now. What authority can there be for that? I have seen

it stated in public speeches, but I cannot understand the intellectual process by which it has been arrived at. It seems to be assumed that consumption is constant, but the mass of people are living up to their incomes, and if they have to pay more, they will certainly consume less. If you spend—if you have to pay for eight hours' work the same as you would for ten, and which, you say, will thus give employment for extra men, you will have, to a great extent, to increase the price of goods you sell to cover the extra burden. By this means you will increase the price of commodities, and consequently interfere with the employment for workmen in the industries of this country. Well, I see my friends opposite shaking their heads, and I must ask them to consider that they cannot push everything aside. There is a third point, and that is that you say you do not think there would be any loss to this country. You are, I think, a little premature in hampering the traders of this country. If you hamper the employers of this country by legislation, which they are earnestly resisting, and which they say interferes with their undertakings and competition with other countries, you will drive them away. It is very easy at the present day to move from one country to another. We have tariffs—in some cases low tariffs—in other countries, and I think it is a great temptation to capitalists to go away into another country. If he goes inside the tariff zone of the United States, to

Spain, or to France, he will enjoy entire freedom from the taxation which this and other countries impose, while this new career which opens would be disappointing to you workmen. The M'Kinley tariff made a great difference to workmen when it was brought into operation. I must remind you that this is a tremendous experiment which you ask the Government to do, and how far it will have the effect of driving capital and capitalists away from this country I cannot foresee. I find, and I must acknowledge, that the workmen of this country are good workmen, and one of the principal causes of our prosperity, and they have been a very large factor in our success. I ask you, in conclusion, to think and be careful over this question, for you can easily make mistakes, and if one is not careful, irremedial damage will be wrought upon the interests of all, and especially you workmen, which, I am sure, you will be sorry to see. I have submitted these considerations, and I ask you to think of them carefully, and of the fearful interests you have in hand. If you make a mistake we shall all suffer, and your class will suffer the most of all."

Inspired possibly by the near approach of the general election, Lord Salisbury delivered a speech at Hastings on the 18th of May, which aroused very considerable speculation as to his future policy upon free trade. The meeting was held in connection with the annual conference of the Home Counties Division of the National Union of Conservative Associations. He

said: "There are difficult questions of deep importance agitating us. We cannot look abroad into the territories which are occupied by the great industries of this country without a feeling of sorrow and misgiving. It is, indeed, painful to think that the men who should be working with the capitalists, and should enable them to work in order not only to promote their own well-being and the industry of the classes that depend upon them and the prosperity of this mighty Empire, are at this moment divided, and industry is paralysed and misery stalks abroad. No man can look upon that spectacle without regret; but at the very moment when difficulties and dangers are upon you, at that very moment we have to guard ourselves against the counsels of the empirics who would offer to us solutions that are no solutions, and remedies that would aggravate the disease. I deeply wish that some means of appeasing this war could be established which would give to the labourer sufficient for his maintenance in comfort, and sufficient time for the cultivation of his moral and intellectual being. But I know that these things are not done by the ukases of Government or of a Parliament—they are done by the growth in knowledge and wisdom of humanity itself, by the action of public opinion, which is more powerful than any Acts of Parliament, and the place of which no Acts of Parliament can presume to take. Many years ago the capitalists of this country thought they could remedy the difficulties between capital and labour by Acts of

Parliament, and they tried by forbidding the formation of trade-unions or strikes, or any method by which the discontent of Labour could be made known. They failed miserably. They hindered and arrested the industry of the country; they did not gain the end they had in view. The Acts of Parliament on which they relied were swept away; but now Labour, which has in these days become powerful, is exposed to the same error, and is falling into the same evil counsels that the evil which it dreads can be remedied by Acts of Parliament. Labourers should learn from the past that these things cannot be remedied by Acts of Parliament. Parliament may help them by facilitating their road, and Parliament may sweep away any obstacle, but that is all; a better state of things must come from a higher conception of duty, both on the part of employers and employed. I do not doubt—it may be long, but I do not doubt that we shall ultimately reach that goal. Acts of Parliament on the one side or the other are vain, but we shall, I do not doubt, reach a point where these terrible conflicts may be adjusted without the doctrine of social war. By these strikes men face starvation themselves in order that they may inflict ruin upon their employers, and that out of these conflicts the objects for which they are struggling may be gained. But these are not the methods which the civilised experience of the world has shown that humanity can safely adopt. All the great triumphs of civilisation in the past have been in

the substitution of judicial doctrine for the cold, cruel arbitrament of war. We have got rid of private war between small magnate and small magnate in this country ; we have got rid of the duel between man and man, and we are slowly, as far as we can, substituting arbitration for struggles in international disputes. Can you doubt that the great interests of Labour will not follow that same road which civilisation has hitherto pursued, and that we shall in the end, by the course of public opinion, by the pressure of moral obligation on those who are concerned, that we shall learn to find in the decisions of some arbitrating, mediating power the results which men are now attaining at the cost of such vast suffering to themselves and to others through these miserable strikes ? On this matter I can only say that I believe the Government may give useful assistance—very useful assistance—when it is found that men are willing to operate with them ; but as long as men insist on maintaining this hostile attitude, the useful interposition of the Government or of Parliament is almost excluded.

“ Well, there is another matter which occupies our minds, and in which I think the prosperity of this country is greatly involved. I allude to the question of our external trade. After all, this little island lives as a trading island. We could not produce enough to sustain the population that lives upon this island, and it is only by the great industries that exist here, and find markets in foreign countries, that we are able to

maintain the vast population of this island. But a danger is growing up. Forty or fifty years ago everybody believed that free trade had conquered the world, and prophesied that every nation would shortly follow the example of England, and would give itself up to free trade. Well, the results were not exactly what was prophesied, but the less satisfactory they were, the more the devoted votaries of free trade prophesied that it would come right at last. But we see now, after many years' experience, and explain it how we may, that foreign nations are raising one after another a wall of protection round their shores, which excludes us from their markets. As far as they are concerned it is their policy to kill our trade. And this state of things does not get better; on the contrary, it seems constantly to get worse. Now, I shall, of course, if I utter a word in reference to free trade, be accused of being a Protectionist, of trying to overthrow free trade, and of all other crimes which a free imagination can attach to commercial heterodoxy. But all the same, I ask you to set yourselves free from all that vituperative doctrine, and to consider whether the true doctrine of free trade carries you as far as some of these gentlemen would wish you to go. Every religion has its counterpart in the inventions and legends and traditions which grow upon and around it. The Old Testament had its canonical books, but it also had its Talmud and its Mishna, inventions of the Rabbis. Now, this book of Free Trade has had many Rabbinical translators,

and one of the difficulties we have to contend with is the strong and unreasonable rigour of the doctrines which these Rabbis have imposed upon us. In the office which I have the honour to hold, I have to see a great deal, and one thing which I find is that we live in an age of war tariffs. Every nation is trying how it can, by agreement with its neighbours, get the greatest possible protection for its own industry, and at the same time the greatest possible access to the markets. That negotiation is constantly going on. It has been going on for the last year and a half with great activity, and the important point is that while A. is very anxious to get the favour of B., and B. anxious to get the favour of C., nobody cares a straw about getting the commercial favour of Great Britain. What is the reason of that? It is that Great Britain has deliberately stripped herself of the armour and weapons with which the battle has to be fought. You cannot do business in this world of evil on these terms. If you go to a market you must bring money with you, and if you fight, you must fight with the weapons with which those with whom you have to contend are fighting. It is of no use for you to go into the market and say, 'I am a Quaker; I do not fight at all; I have no arms, I have no weapons;' and to expect people will pay the same regard to you, and be as anxious to obtain your goodwill and consult your interests as they will be of people who have retained their armour and still wield their weapons.

“Now, the weapon with which they all fight is admission to their own markets; that is to say, A. says to B., ‘If you will make your duties such as to enable me to sell in your markets, I will make my duties such as will give you a sale in my markets.’ But we have begun by saying we will levy no duties on anybody, for we regard it as contrary and disloyal to the glorious and sacred doctrine of Free Trade to levy duties upon anybody for the sake of anything we can get by it. I can only say that that is noble, but it is not business, and on those terms you will get nothing. I am sorry to be obliged to tell you that practically you are getting nothing. The feeling of this country by its authorised exponents has been against what is called a retaliatory policy. That is so, I assure you. We, as the Government of the country, have laid it down to ourselves as a strict rule that we are bound not to turn from the traditional policy of this country, unless we are quite convinced that the majority of the country is with us, because in foreign affairs consistency of policy is beyond all things necessary. Although that is the case, if I may aspire to fill the office of counsellor to the public mind, I would ask you to form your own opinions without reference to the traditions or the denunciations, and not to care two straws whether you are orthodox or not, to form your own opinions according to the dictates of common sense. I would impress upon you that if you intend in this conflict of commercial treaties to hold your own,

you must be prepared, if need be, to inflict upon the nations that injure you the penalty which is in your hands of refusing them access to your markets. (A voice, "Common-sense at last.") There is a reproach in that interruption, but I am bound to say I have never said anything else. I am bound at the same time to tell you what the difficulty is. The country we have the most reason to complain of is the United States, a country which furnishes us mainly, though not entirely, with articles of food which are essential to the people, and with raw material essential to our manufactures, and which we cannot exclude without serious injury to ourselves. Now in this matter I am not in the least prepared, for the sake of punishing other nations, to inflict any danger or serious wound upon ourselves. I maintain that we must confine ourselves, at least for the present, to those subjects on which we would not suffer very much injury, whether the importation was continued or diminished. But what I complain of the Rabbis of whom I have just spoken is that they confuse this vital point. They say everything must be given to the consumers. Well, if the consumer is the man who maintains the industry of the country or is the people at large, I quite agree with them you cannot raise the price of food or the price of raw material. But there is an enormous mass of other importations from other countries besides the United States which are mere matters of luxurious consumption. If it be a question of wine or silk, or

spirits or gloves, or lace, or anything of that kind—I think there is a great deal to be said for hops—I should not in the least shirk from diminishing the consumption and interfering with the comfort of the excellent people who consume these articles of luxury for the purpose of maintaining our rights in this commercial war, and insisting upon our access to the markets of our neighbours. This is very heterodox doctrine, and I am afraid I shall be excommunicated for having maintained it; and I am not sure you will escape from similar anathemas, therefore I warn you of the danger you incur. But as one whose duty it is to say what he thinks, I say we must distinguish between consumer and consumer, and while preserving the rights of the consumer, who is co-existent with the whole industry or with the whole people of this country, we may very fairly use our power over the importations which merely minister to luxury in order to maintain our own in this great commercial battle.

“Now of course when I have promised to speak to you about all that is on my mind, you will not imagine I shall be silent about Ireland. But I have a great difficulty in speaking about it. It is like fighting with a ghost. I don’t know what scheme or proposal I am resisting, and no efforts that we can make have induced our opponents, who challenge our policy, to tell us what they would substitute in its place. We have heard of appealing to the verdict of the country;

but did you ever hear of a verdict given by a jury in a matter where counsel for the prosecution did not state his case? That is really what we have to deal with. It is more like a chapter out of 'Alice in Wonderland' than a section of serious politics. But when we cannot get the best authority, we must be content with authorities of inferior description. Mr. Justin M'Carthy has given us an idea of what he wants for Ireland. He says: 'We do not want separation, and we only want the position of Canada.' But just consider what that means. If there ever was such a thing in this world, the union of Great Britain with Canada is a union of hearts. But if you pass from this union of hearts, on questions of pure law and obligation, you will see that the kind of position that Canada possesses in respect of this country, if it were given to Ireland, would mean something very different. You can see this for yourself by reading the papers every day. The intelligence from Belfast or the intelligence from Dublin shows you what a mere absurdity it is to compare the condition of Canada and her feelings towards England with the feelings which, unhappily, a large part of Ireland must yet for several generations feel, if there is any truth in race, religious hatred, or tradition. Well, I look to Mr. Justin M'Carthy, and he tells me it is to be Canada; but I look on the other side, and see a rising lawyer, a man of great distinction—Mr. Asquith—who probably, if there should be a Liberal Government, will occupy a high position in it.

He has that preternatural gift, which lawyers possess, of seeing what their brief is to be before the brief is delivered into their hands; and he has told us that whatever happens, the Irish Members who now adorn the House of Commons are still to occupy their seats there. If I combine these two revelations, it certainly presents the oddest picture of a message of peace between two countries. It is offering to Ireland the maximum of independence, and to England the minimum of relief.

“ Well, I have spoken to you about the effect of the proposed Irish legislation upon the people of this country. I cannot conclude without a word upon its effect upon some portion of the inhabitants of Ireland, who will be immediately subjected to it. On a late occasion I ventured to bring forward in earnest language the grievance of the Ulster people. I had no notion I was treading upon so tender a corn. I have produced an amount of wrath which indicates the sensitiveness of the conscience I have touched. But those who suggest that I have evoked or encouraged a danger against which I ventured to warn them, are as foolish as if they should say that a seaman in one of your ships, employed on the look-out, and calling out ‘ Breakers ahead ! ’ should be blamed as the creator of the reefs upon which the ship was rushing. Danger lies across their path, and it will require something much more solid and substantial to escape from it than the jokes of Sir William Harcourt or the declarations

of Lord Rosebery. These great persons seem to me to want imagination. They cannot understand the horror with which those men see again arise the spectre which so often in the course of their history has been the omen of desolation, and sorrow, and murder to themselves. They deceive themselves with a metaphor which is very well in ordinary writing and talking, but which is merely a metaphor—the word we so frequently use—of self-government. Self-government in a community divided to its base is a bitter mockery.

“Sir William Harcourt talks of ascendancy. He tells us that the passions to which we appeal are the passions of ascendancy. I do not know whether he ever read the appeal of the non-Episcopalian ministers in Ireland to their Nonconformist fellows in England. If it were safe to predict anything of Sir William Harcourt, I would predict that he would not impute any wish for ascendancy to these men, these Baptist, Wesleyan, and Presbyterian ministers of Ireland, who have addressed this appeal to their co-religionists as regards this great issue. They at least have never had the ascendancy; they have never been accused of aiming at it. If there has been ascendancy, which I am not prepared to admit, they have been rather the victims than the exercisers of it.” Here Lord Salisbury read a portion of the appeal referred to, which set forth that “under a Home Rule Government the interests and liberties of the Irish people,

and especially of the Irish Protestants, would be insecure ; the struggle between Catholics and Protestants would be intensified ; and the eventual result would be, in all certainty, civil war of the most sanguinary character." " Now," continued his Lordship, " if you please examine these witnesses. Is there anybody who knows Ireland better than they do ? Are they biassed by any partisan feeling ? They are driven by a strong sense of the truth of the cause and the dangers which lie before them. Do not tell me that they are animated by any principle of ascendancy ; they never had it, and never could have it : and we in this country would be at fault if we did not pay attention to witnesses so competent to advise us. Well, it has been said that I have urged Ulster to rebellion. I do not in the least admit it ; but in place of criticising my own words, I should like to read to you the words of a great Prime Minister of the past, a man who never, by his bitterest enemies, was accused of reckless conduct or of uncautious language. I refer to the great Sir Robert Peel. These were the words he used, ' Repeal the Union, and then you shall see the spirit of the Protestant North, that has been lying, not asleep, but in watchful repose, confiding in the justice and protection of England ; you shall then see it arise in conscious strength to defend itself with its own native and sufficient energies from the vile and debasing domination which would be begotten from the foul union of religious hatred and perverse ambition.' These are

not my words, but they are much stronger than any words I have used : and now, with warning from the grave of the illustrious past to guide you, I entreat the electors of Great Britain to pause before they commit themselves to this mad experiment. I do not doubt that the dangers which we indicate are real. I know the spirit of the men with whom we are dealing. I know their prejudices, their traditions, and their perhaps exaggerated apprehensions ; but I also know the strong fibre of the people whom we are about to subject to the hoof of hereditary foes. I would only point out to you what you have read to-day and yesterday in your papers, to show you that we have not to deal with the ordinary divisions of religion or of class : we have to deal with Dr. Walsh and his political friends—the same Dr. Walsh who, as appears in the papers, is the principal and dominant proprietor of a violent secular partisan journal. Now remember that on your action at the next election may possibly depend the position which Great Britain will be called upon to adopt. The ancestors of these men in the North of Ireland won freedom for you by the sacrifice of their blood and treasure. If you put yourselves in the position that you may be called upon to act against them, you will have your arm paralysed by a sense of what they have done for freedom, and by the knowledge that every man to whom freedom and progress are dear in this country will sympathise with what they do. Is not that a fearful position in which to put the majesty and

strength of the English law? I will not prophesy what the immediate effect will be; but I will say that in taking such a course, you are planting a root of bitterness, under whose growth the strong union and harmony and the majesty of the Empire will wither away, and the most valuable and sacred institutions that we share will be shaken to their very bases."

On Tuesday, June 28th, Parliament was prorogued with a view to a dissolution. The Queen's Speech reviewed the achievements of the sixth session of the twelfth Parliament of the present reign. It said—

"The treaties have been duly ratified which refer our differences with the United States, in respect to Behring's Sea, to arbitration.

"The ratification also of the final act of the Brussels Conference for the suppression of the slave trade has, after many delays, been completed. The Government of France, however, has made reservations in regard to some of the provisions which affect operations against the maritime slave trade.

"I have gladly given my assent to several Bills which you have been able to consider and to sanction, notwithstanding that the duration of the session has been exceptionally short. The arrangements you have made for enabling labouring men to become purchasers of small agricultural holdings will increase the class of cultivating owners, which is of great importance to the State. The application to Ireland of those educational measures which have been recently adopted in

Great Britain will confer great benefits upon the poorer classes of that country. You have sanctioned valuable provisions for reforming the police administration in Scottish burghs, and for extending to Scotland the facilities for the hire of allotments, which were given to the people of England and Wales a few years ago. At the same time, you have done much to lighten the burden of local taxation in that country, and to foster the interests of secondary and of university education. The Act for strengthening the discipline of the Church of England in regard to moral offences accomplishes a necessary reform which has been too long delayed.

“I have willingly accepted a measure for improving the constitution and proceedings of the Legislative Councils in India, which will, I trust, enable my Government in that country more fully to ascertain the opinions and wishes of various races and classes of my subjects, and to secure the co-operation of those best qualified to give advice and assistance in the conduct of affairs.

“I have assented gladly to the measures which you have wisely and generously adopted for the relief of my subjects in the island of Mauritius under the unexampled calamity which has overtaken them.”

On the same day the Marquis of Salisbury issued a manifesto to the electors of the United Kingdom.

The General Election commenced on the 5th of July; on the 29th of the same month, the day on which the last return was announced, the numbers

stood—Conservatives, 266; Unionists, 49; Liberals, 355. 2,093,027 votes were recorded for the Ministry, and 2,262,793 for their opponents.

The new Parliament met on the 5th August, and on the 8th Mr. Asquith moved a vote of non-confidence, which was carried on the 11th by a majority of 40. Lord Salisbury at once resigned, and by the 19th of the same month the transfer of power had been effected, and Mr. Gladstone once more in office.

The present intense strain of political feeling, and the general conviction that we are upon the eve of vast political changes, in which he must necessarily play a prominent part, make it unwise to say too much of Lord Salisbury's attainments and triumphs, except that justice demands we should contrast the opinion prevalent a few years ago with that now generally held with regard to his capacity for supreme rule. It is not too much to say that the Marquis of Salisbury has far surpassed the expectation of his most ardent admirers by the strength as much as by the progressive character of his administration. Since his accession to power the country has witnessed most astonishing changes: for example—in county government and in educational progress; while even those who have most resented the firm hand that has held the helm have admired the skilful steersman who has avoided the perils that attend the navigation of such a huge vessel as ours. It can scarcely be too great an assertion to make if we confess that we

place him among the statesmen whose names and lives will always be regarded as the material of British history, and say that in the far future the place occupied in histories of this time by the life and labours of Lord Salisbury will be neither small nor insignificant.

Concerning the man, it was said of his appearance and style of speech, that "about both there is something not to be described, but which young ladies would indicate by the much-abused word interesting, and what we may endeavour to designate by the word melancholy. It is but seldom that his fine powerful face does not wear a certain air of melancholy, and the tones of his voice are as a rule subdued and plaintive. He is an effective speaker, terse, clear, and vigorous at all times ; and though not eloquent in the ordinary acceptation of the word—that is to say, not rhetorical in his speech—he is never feeble, and he frequently speaks with remarkable power. Now the acidity of his earlier years is passing away, nothing but a grateful flavour remaining to remind us of what he once was, no one can fail to derive pleasure from listening to him when he is speaking upon any question of importance, and the dignity and courtesy which, as a rule, characterise his manner, well befit the place in which he now holds such a distinguished position."

A generous tribute was once paid by Mr. Gladstone to the sterling integrity of his great rival. Some one had violently attacked Lord Salisbury in the hearing

of Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone said, "I don't believe that Salisbury is at all governed by political ambition. I believe him to be perfectly honest, and I can never think very unkindly of him since the day I first saw him, a bright boy in red petticoats, playing with his mother."

To which opinion we may add a quotation from Mr. Stead, who says, "I remember once asking Mr. Balfour, long before he was ever a Cabinet Minister, whether among English politicians he knew one man who took a wide and comprehensive view of the interests of the Empire, who cared for his country as most men cared for party, and who believed in England as did the great Elizabethans of old? He said, 'I know one.' He meant his uncle."

Lord Salisbury himself expressed the supreme conviction which has animated and controlled his life when he said, "We are trustees for the British Empire. We have received that trust with all its strength, all its glory, all its traditions; and the one thing that we have to take care of is that we pass them on untarnished to our successors."

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